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MADAME'S GOVERNESS.

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A LOVELY August day, the sun pouring a flood of silver glory over the world; Loch Lomond lying deep and still beneath the purple mountains, whose peaks and chains were painted on the glassy surface like another wild mountain-world upside-down; a solemn stillness, the "eternal silences" of the mighty hills broken sometimes by the cry of the plover echoing mournfully among the rocky heights, dying away to make the stillness seem deeper than before. White clouds were blowing across the sapphire blue sky by the north wind that brought such a clear cool day to the Highland loch, and the shadows were hurried over the gray and purple mountain-sides, making lovely changeful effects of light and color. Ben Lomond lifted his head proudly into the infinite height of heaven, overtopping the more distant peaks, the cool water lay at his feet, scarcely a ripple ruffling the surface.

Only one house in sight—a pretty square, white-walled mansion, the green lawn and bright flower-beds of which stretched down to the very edge of the water. It nestled close under the hills, and looked up at Ben Lomond opposite, protecting it from the sharp east wind. It was one of the most peaceful scenes in the world on this summer day. In winter it would be a picture of another kind; it would look a very lonely, defenceless little house, dwarfed by the terrible frowning mountains, that would cast dark shadows over it, making its day one long weary night. Then one could think of robbers and murderers, of ghastly tales of Highland vengeance, of the cruel raids that had laid waste the farms and glens down this very loch, in the old days of the outlawed Macgregors.

But that was long ago; the nameless clan had got its name back again. Hundreds of years had passed, bringing with them peace and civilization and order; it was late in the nineteenth century, and one felt safe from the terrors of the fifteenth and [illegible]enth, the deadly feud, the treacherous murder, the night-surprise, followed by the burning homestead.

The still life-picture changed. Human beings came out from the white house, and made it a pretty little picture of modern country life. Two fair-haired girls, in dark-blue dresses, with wide blue sailor-collars and little round sailor-hats, ran across the lawn to the little landing-place that stretched into the loch, and looked anxiously southward, shading their eyes from the pitiless sun. They were pretty girls—pretty with the unique loveliness of extreme youth; for their features were not so fine and delicate as those of the Anglo-Saxon race. They were laughing, calling to each other in English, but speaking with a slight peculiar foreign accent. Their names sounded strange too—they were not such names as one would expect to hear on the shore of a Scottish loch.

"It is p[illegible]ven, Vera," said the younger; "are you sure you cannot see the steamer? Ah, what is that? Something is coming at last!"

"Here she is, *maminka!*" called the other

WIFE—Dear Charles, my room is small, but I wish you were as comfortable as [illegible] my account. I think only of you and your comfort. I am.

girl to a lady who was sitting by the open window knitting, in the shade of a bending mountain-ash that cast its broad shadow over the garden corner during the morning.

"Olga, come back for your sunshade," was the answer; "you will have to stand a long time yet, getting your face scorched. There is no hurry."

But Olga was much more interested in the arrival of the steamer than in her complexion. She was only fourteen, and disregarded her mother's anxiety. They waited impatiently, eager to run into the water, if that would have hastened matters, and at last the Clan-Alpine steamed into sight of the house, puffing and gasping as it slowly slackened its pace and stopped at the wooden steps and tiny pier.

Only one passenger got out—a strikingly beautiful young lady, dressed very quietly and tastefully in gray, with a wide picturesque straw hat, and a tea-rose at her waist.

Vera and Olga were so surprised at beholding any one so very handsome and so patrician-looking come to teach them, as she had undertaken to do, "thorough English, French, and German, music, singing, and water-color drawing," that they drew back from bestowing the warm welcome they had intend[illegible]inking there must be some mistake.

But the lady came to them, quite confidently, but with the easy self-possession of good breeding—not with the assurance of forward vulgarity—holding out her hand, and looking up at tall Vera with soft trusting violet eyes.

"Mademoiselle Scobeleff?" she said in pure English and a most musical voice. "I am so glad to see you. Will you kindly call a servant to carry my box? There is only one large one; and there is a square white basket."

Madame Scobeleff came forward kindly to receive her. She was of Scottish family, and had married a Russian nobleman, which accounted for the girls speaking English habitually and well.

She too was surprised by the unusual beauty of her governess; and a pang of foreboding shot through the mother's heart. What a dangerous inmate for a house containing only one son! She [illegible]d she had gone to Edinburgh herself to seek a governess whom she could have seen, and not trusted to advertising. The girl had sent a photograph, and madame had been won by the sweet pleasant face; but now she saw how little photography was to be trusted, especially in a case like this, where the great beauty lay in color and in the ever-changing expression. But she had had the best testimonials with Helen Johnstone. Lady Dundas had spoken of her cleverness, her docility, her patience, her perfect singing and rare skill in teaching it, and her thorough trustworthiness. She had come to her direct from a Parisian boarding-school, where she had been a pupil-teacher, and had brought an unimpeachable character. But what Madame Scobeleff remembered with most satisfaction was the fact that Lady Dundas had four unmarried sons in the house, and yet this lovely girl had lived three years there, and evidently passed scatheless through the trial, as Helen had left her situation solely because Miss Dundas, the only daughter, had finished her education, not because of any undesirable entanglement with a susceptible brother, or Lady Dundas would not have spoken so warmly of her character.

They lunched in a cool low-ceiled room looking upon the loch, the windows wide open, letting in the perfume of the roses outside and the low plash of the water against the garden-wall.

"My son is shooting; but I have sent his luncheon by a servant, thinking you would be tired, Miss Johnstone. To-morrow you and the girls can take it. There will be no lessons until next week. You must learn to know us and to feel at home before you begin work."

They had a lovely ramble that afternoon when it grew cooler, the girls quite charmed by the bright gayety of their new companion. She was so interested in everything they showed her—the farm-yard round the hill, with the ducks swimming in the shallow pond, the calves running to put their wet noses through the bars of the gate to be caressed, the sheep, with their fleecy full-grown lambs, browsing on the green side of the little glen, the picturesque cottagers, the girls running about bare-legged, dressed in tartan, speaking in a language quite incomprehensible to Helen's Southern ears.

They went back to the house, and had tea in the pleasant drawing-room full of flowers and ferns and great bunches of heather. It might have been any peaceful English home but for the wild hills outside. Madame Scobeleff poured out tea into delicate pink cups; and the girls chatted, planning picnics

and boating-excursions that would have filled up the time until Christmas.

"You don't intend learning many lessons, Vera," said her mother, smiling. "After your long holiday, we must make the most of our time now."

"But Miss Johnstone must see the Highlands," returned Vera. "She has never been to Scotland until now."

"You are English, I believe?" said Madame Scobeleff, turning to Helen.

"Yes—English, of course," she answered calmly, but looking questioningly at madame, a faint pink coming over her forehead, but dying away so quickly that, sitting as she was, with her back to the light, it was unnoticed.

"It was your Scotch name that made me ask, dear," said madame. "I knew you were English by birth and education, but your blood may be Scotch; and yet you don't look like a countrywoman of mine."

"Oh, no, I am not Scotch at all!" said Helen, putting her teaspoon straight in her saucer. She had touched it inadvertently and nearly knocked it out.

"Your father probably was descended from a Scotch family?" said Vera, with youthful want of tact, though not with any impertinent curiosity. She merely continued the subject, though her mother had let it drop.

Helen's expression changed completely. All the light and color died out of her face. Her soft violet eyes became hard and blue, like steel, her lips tightened. She looked ten years older. But she answered without any hesitation, only with a sound of repression in her voice more than any very apparent hardening:—

"Very likely."

"Something wrong about her father, poor girl!" thought Madame Scobeleff, changing the conversation so easily and gracefully that nobody could have detected that she did it purposely.

An hour later Basil Scobeleff came into the drawing-room, finding it apparently deserted and dark with the early shades of the Highland evening outside. The loch lay like molten gold, and Ben Lomond was clothed from base to summit in a robe of glory. A low shiver passed over the burnished surface, trembled through the ash-trees and the shrubs in the garden, and died away, leaving only the wonderful golden silence of the sunset. Then Vera came forward from a dark corner beside the piano, where she had been hunting for a song, in a white dress, with rowan-berries in her bosom.

"Basil, she has come—Miss Johnstone—our governess. She is so pretty and nice! She went into the garden just as you came in. I will call her and introduce her."

Basil was tired and hungry, and not in any hurry to make the acquaintance of the new governess; but he could not help himself as she was so near; so he stood and waited while Vera went out by the window—a French window opening upon the lawn—to seek her.

Then he saw her, in her white dress, standing in the window framed by the climbing roses and honeysuckle, against a background of golden light, her face nearly as white as her dress—no ribbon or flower to relieve its deadness, only the sunlight upon her golden hair. He advanced in astonished admiration. She stood quite still, like a statue in its niche. She made no movement forward, so he had to go close to her, up to the window.

"This is my brother Basil, Miss Johnstone," said Vera in her fresh girlish voice, coming into the foreground.

He greeted her with courtly grace, his uncontrollable admiration shining out of his blue eyes. He was fair and good to look upon, with a long light mustache and curly hair, ruffled by the mountain breezes. He was tall and well made, his shooting-costume setting off his free graceful carriage and shapely limbs. He was of the very best type of Russian beauty, very like his godfather, the Czar Nicholas—tall, above the average height of a tall race, with soldierly bearing and mild kind eyes.

And yet there was no admiration in Helen's eyes. Surely he was mistaken? It must have been the cold air from the loch that reached her in her thin dress, but a shudder—almost imperceptible—ran through her from head to foot as she looked at him—looked for one moment with a glance of horror and loathing unutterable.

It was so quickly over—the slight quiver and the glance—that Basil was sure he had imagined it. She came into the room, white and silent; but Vera was full of questions about her brother's sport, and covered the silence.

"I must go and dress," he said. "I have only ten minutes to do it in;" and he hurried out of the room.

Then lights came, and Madame Scobeleff, in trailing silk and lace, and Olga, like Vera, in white with ash-berries, with which they persisted in adorning themselves, in spite of their yellow hair. They waited for Basil. Then he came in, fair and patrician, in his black and white; and he offered his arm, as a matter of course, to the stranger. She shrank back as she touched it. Nobody noticed the movement but Madame Scobeleff, who ascribed it to shyness. Then Miss Johnstone laid her hand upon Basil's black sleeve and walked out with him to dinner.

"What a little frightened thing it is!" he thought, feeling the girl tremble. "I suppose she is not used to dining with the family—probably spent her evenings alone in the school-room."

They were such a small family, and so dependent on each other for society, that Madame Scobeleff could not have banished her governess from the dinner-table, though she began to wish she had done so when she saw the unnecessary courtesy, as she deemed it, that her son showed the fair stranger.

When they went into the drawing-room, Basil going with them, being a Russian and not bound to follow unsociable English fashions, Miss Johnstone was asked to sing.

"The girls will sing too, and you shall judge of them at once. Vera has a sweet voice; but they are both two young to have been trained. It will be a great treat to have your music to enliven our dull evenings."

If her beauty had been a surprise, it was as nothing compared with her voice. Basil was lying back in an easy-chair, looking out at the dark loch, now all gloom and mystery, beneath the mountains, and a pale green-blue sky, from which the after-glow had just faded. A white planet shone in the eastern heaven, like a great diamond crowning majestic Ben Lomond. The other hills were fading away into the endless distances of the coming night.

Then a flood of song poured forth, filling the room, floating out into the silence of the night—such exquisite melody, so infinitely pathetic, that they all listened breathless, enchanted. It was only an Italian aria from an opera that they all knew; but out there, beside the lonely mountains, it sounded like the wail of the coronach, the wild appeal for vengeance. Basil could not see her; he only heard her voice; and it thrilled him through every nerve. In spite of its beauty, its clear high notes and soft low ones, so carefully trained, there was something weird and strange in it that held Basil spell-bound, something that carried to him less of the delight that music gives than a sensation of vague terror. Madame Scobeleff, her face turned to the river, saw only a girl sitting on a music-stool, playing her own accompaniment and yet singing with a marvelous amount of almost theatrical science.

"Thank you," she said, when the song had died away in one last long tender wail. "You have a remarkable voice, and have been extremely well taught. I am afraid that you will hardly make your pupils sing like you."

She wondered secretly whether her governess had been trained for the stage, and, if so, why she had not chosen a career in which she might have met with brilliant success. Then she thought kindly that it was to the girl's credit if she had turned away from that perilous, if glittering, road to fame, and come rather to teach and toil in a dull school-room. With such beauty and such a voice, she might have amassed a princely fortune, and reigned a queen of song, like Patti.

Still she wished that Basil would not be so very kind to his sisters and their governess as to give up his shooting for the two or three days that intervened before lessons began, and row them up the deep loch, towards the north, where it lay like a broad river between the hills, now in the full, purple bloom of the heather, or towards the south, where they floated in and out among the islands, sometimes stopping at one to have picnic luncheon. At other times he rowed them across the lake, mooring the boat at Inversnaid; and then they walked miles into the lonely wild Rob Roy country, looking with curious awe at the deserted huts of the landless, nameless clan; and Vera told them the stories she had heard from the cottagers and had read in Scott's novels—stories of fierce fights, endless feuds, and pitiless vengeance. Basil disliked to hear these stories, and would walk on with Olga or change the theme. Helen listened with dilated eyes and white cheeks, not speaking, but drawing Vera on by her intense interest.

Vera did not know the reason Basil had to shudder at hearing of the dark deeds of bygone days. She and Olga were so young that they had been kept in perfect ignorance of the politics of their country. They had lived a

nomad life for many years, and barely remembered their Russian home. They knew their father had been shot, and supposed that it had been in a battle. Their mother never mentioned the circumstances; she had suffered too terribly at the time, and bore witness still to the agony she had undergone by her prematurely blanched hair and sad though gentle face.

Basil had remained in Russia for some time after their departure—he had been an officer in the Emperor's Army, and had large estates in the government of Novgorod—but suddenly he had come to them in their London home; and they had all gone to live in a quiet out-of-the-way Cornish village, until this summer, when Basil had taken the white house by Loch Lomond for four months.

Vera and Olga were very like English girls, for their mother was a Mackenzie of Kintail, whom Count Scobeleff had met in London when he was an *attache* at the Russian Embassy. They had had an English daily governess when in London; but she had not been replaced since they went to Cornwall, and they had run wild for more than a year. Then Madame Scobeleff had advertised for a resident governess, and Helen Johnstone, armed with references to Lady Dundas and a Parisian school, was the result.

"You would not think, Miss Johnstone," said Vera one day, after lessons had been duly begun, "living in this peaceful, pretty place, that such things could be possible as the terrible deeds that were done here, on these very rocks and heather. Is it not a comfort to think that we were born quite lately, and not in those wicked murderous times? Fancy—if one great family were to shut up eight score of another family in a church, and then set fire to it and burn them up! That is what the Drummonds did to the Murrays, in that very county of Perth that is so near that you can see the hill-top from here. And once the wild Macgregors killed a man, and cut his head off, and put it on his table with bread and cheese in his mouth. And the worst of all was Stewart of Ardvoirlich, who murdered his dear friend, young Lord Kilpont, who had fought by his side, and even slept with him in the camp, because Lord Kilpont would not help him to murder his general. Do these stories frighten you, Miss Johnstone? It is all so long ago, I cannot realize them; but you look so pale, as if you thought they could happen again."

"No—nonsense!" said Helen, almost pettishly. "My head has been aching all the morning; I think there is thunder in the air."

Unlike Russians in their usual habits and tastes, the Scobeleffs kept the windows open all day; but on this day there was no air; it was so close and sultry that it seemed as if one could not have breathed even on the top of Ben Lomond. The loch lay motionless in its deep bed, as if it had been changed into a mirror of steel; the few trees were silent, as with the silence of death, only that sometimes a ghostly shiver ran through them. Then low among the distant Grampians rolled the first warning *tremolo* of the storm.

"I wish Basil would come back," said his mother uneasily. "It is dangerous being out on the hills on a thunderstorm."

Vera lit a candle and placed it before the picture of the Blessed Virgin, which they had placed in the east corner of the room, kneeling for a minute in prayer. Then she went to the window to watch the gathering storm.

Quickly it came on, in its awful grandeur, its terrible resistless might. The thunder rolled among the hills in an unceasing roar, echo answering echo from the lofty peaks and low gray rocks. The water of the loch was lashed into foamy waves, beating and tossing against the shores. Huge hailstones rushed along the ground and into the room through the open window; the lightning burst from the dense black cloud, flash after flash, water and hills blazing in its lurid glare.

"Oh, Basil, Basil!" cried Madame Scobeleff. "He will be killed—he cannot live in a storm like this! Heaven have mercy on us!"

She and Vera knelt by the sacred picture; Olga, too frightened for prayer, buried her face, sobbing, in the sofa cushions.

"Where is Miss Johnstone?" inquired Vera, suddenly recollecting the governess.

"Gone to bed most likely, poor thing," said madame. "See—the storm is passing over. Go and seek Miss Johnstone, Olga. It is quite safe now."

Helen had left the room silently and gone to her own little chamber that overlooked the hills. But she was not crouching in terror among her pillows, nor was she pray-

ing. The pretty English governess, with her grave blue eyes and gentle voice, was so strangely transformed that her new friends would hardly have recognized her. She sat by the window, with wide-opened stony eyes and ashy face, clasping her hands so tightly that no human power could have parted them, words, in low hissing whispers, escaping at intervals from her dry strained lips and clenched teeth.

"Escaped—escaped—all in vain! Ah, no, Heaven is too just! Heaven! How can I speak of Heaven?"

Such was the meaning of her words; but they were not spoken in the pure English of her daily life. She gasped them in a sharp, jerky, hissing language that her new friends would have understood quite well, and have been amazed beyond measure to hear coming from Miss Johnstone's lips.

But, as the storm cleared away from the sky, that other fierce wild storm passed from her; and when Olga came to the door she opened it, showing only a very pale face and eyes with dark violet rings round them, which of course could be easily accounted for by a not unusual susceptibility to electric influence.

Basil returned safe, but drenched. He had taken shelter in a shepherds' hut, and came quickly home through the torrents of rain as soon as the thunder and lightning had abated, to assure his mother and sisters of his safety.

"I hope your nerves were not much shaken?" he asked of the governess in French, according to his custom. He did not speak English so well as the others, and they generally talked in French when he was present.

He had seen the expression of intense relief that had come over her face when she saw him, and he misconstrued it. All along she had treated him with cold indifference, rather avoiding him when she could. Perhaps this very avoidance served to attract him more to her, as if it had been the most consummate coquetry; perhaps her wonderful beauty alone would have sufficed. Madame, with her keen eyes, had noticed this behavior with approval; she believed that her new governess "knew her place," which, ladylike and accomplished as she might be, was far beneath that of a Russian noble, caste being very distinctly marked in Russia.

Basil too, so grave and quiet, with the shadow always hanging over him of the memory of perils past and the foreboding of perils that might come, was not one to fall in love with a pretty face and sweet voice for want of something more important to think about. So madame reassured herself, and ceased to watch and worry if they were thrown together accidentally.

Helen went on from day to day in her placid way, attending to her duties, which were light and pleasant, from the brightness and docility of her pupils.

One day was exactly like another, excepting that Sunday marked the passing by of one more week. There was no church to go to; the day of rest was marked only by madame laying aside her knitting, the girls their lesson-books, and Basil his gun. Then Basil and Helen were together all day, for he rowed her and the girls on the loch, or took them long walking expeditions into lonelier parts of the hills than they dared venture to explore unprotected. Very few words passed between them; he addressed her rarely, she never addressed him.

He wondered if she hated him, so irresponsive was she. He remembered the strange look of repulsion that he had first seen on her face—the shudder that shook her when he approached her. Yet it was not possible that a strange girl should hate him whom she had never seen before, and who had treated her with invariable courtesy, even if she were unconscious of the feeling that had sprung up in his heart.

But she was not unconscious. Slowly she read the truth in the blue eyes that followed her so tenderly wherever she moved, in the voice that softened so for her, speaking in the caressing French tongue, in the watchful attention that never let a movement of hers pass unnoticed, in the touch of his hand, so firm, and lingering so lovingly when he assisted her to get into and out of the boat or to climb a precipitous mountain-path. She avoided it whenever she could, shrinking from his touch with a horror that only her stern self-control hid from his notice. But gradually that horror passed away. Then it came back with renewed force when she saw that he loved her.

The quiet sleepers in the white house little guessed what terrible nights were passed by one of its inmates—how she fought and wrestled with herself all through the silent night-watches. Then Basil saw a change come, faint and uncertain as the

first awakening of the dawn; only to hungry watching eyes like his could it have been visible. A new shyness came into her violet eyes as they met his and then looked swiftly down, a new fluttering pink came to her cheeks, trembling for a minute, then fading away. She seemed to have forgotten her former feelings, in those lovely autumn days when they wandered among the gorse and heather. A dreamy languor came over her senses during the long afternoons when, up on the mountain-top, they moved and breathed in the clear fresh air, far above the world of passion and strife and clamor and discord.

But this peace did not last long. One day Olga came into the room where they were at luncheon. She had run out alone after lessons, and had kept them waiting. Basil was carving for them. He had tired of shooting, being a Russian, and finding the pursuit of harmless grouse a tame pursuit after a wolf-hunt.

"See, *maminka!*" she said, holding a little soft white quivering heap in her hands. "It is a young ptarmigan that has been shot through the leg. I shall amputate it, as I did the bullfinch's leg last summer, and put him on a wooden leg and keep him in a cage. He is so soft and delicately colored. He will grow quite tame in time."

All the horror had come back into Helen's face. Her eyes dilated, her lips were drawn; she shuddered so that the glasses on the table rang. They looked at her in astonishment. She was strangely moved at such a trivial incident. She controlled herself by a strong effort.

"Olga," she said in her quick French, her voice still quivering with passion, "you will not be so cruel! A free mountain bird! Oh, kill it—kill it—a thousand times rather! Do not doom it to wear out its heart in captivity!"

A torrent of hysterical tears burst from her eyes, and she hastened from the room.

"What a tender heart! How exquisitely sensitive!" thought Basil.

"What a strange thing!" said Madame Scobeleff. "How could she distress herself to such an extent about a bird? But I have observed that she is extremely nervous, and probably she is ill, though certainly she has been looking better lately than she did just after she came. Follow her, Vera. See if she needs any assistance, poor child!"

But Vera found the bed-room empty.

"She has gone out," said madame placidly. "It is wise. The fresh air will do her more good than sal-volatile. She may have some private trouble that we do not know—that may account for her being upset in this way. Has she had any letters to-day? I often notice that she looks pale and harassed when the post comes."

"There were no letters to-day," said Olga. "Miss Johnstone has not had one for more than a week. They are always from the same person, and always with the London post-mark."

"You inquisitive child!" said her brother reprovingly. "What business have you to exercise a supervision over Miss Johnstone's letters?"

"I can't do that if I wanted," said Olga. "She never even opens them when we are by, much less reads them. And I don't believe she has written more than one letter since she came—and she knows best when she wrote that one. She brought it suddenly out of her pocket on the day she took me to Glasgow to get my boots, and popped it into a post-office as we were passing."

"Hush, Olga!" said Basil in his grave stern voice. "Miss Johnstone's correspondence is not our affair. I cannot have you prying into it."

Helen returned from her lonely walk, calm and gently apologetic.

"I am so grieved to have behaved so badly," she said to Madame Scobeleff, who was pouring out tea. "I think I have not been well since the thunder storm, and overwalked myself yesterday. Pray forgive me."

But her avoidance of Basil was more marked than ever. She made excuses for herself when he took the girls out upon the loch. She was hard upon them, and worked them at their music and drawing as if they had been "going up for certificates." She rarely sang in the evenings, making the girls perform to show their progress. She began a piece of fine lace-work for Madame Scobeleff, to which she was obliged to chain her eyes, sitting so close to a candle that, when she lifted them, she could see nothing beyond it.

Basil, so far, had not defined to himself what his "intentions" were; indeed he had not any "intentions" at all. His mind was too preoccupied by other matters to have room for such sweet thoughts as thoughts of love and marriage. But he had uncon-

sciously drifted into love; he found himself deep in its waters before he was aware; still, save for a longing to have his love returned, a painful uncertainty as to whether it was already returned or not, he did not give a thought to the future. He was pained and puzzled by Helen's behavior. He was sure at one time that the icy indifference had thawed, that she was warming into love, and now it seemed as if the old unaccountable loathing had returned. She never met his eye, she answered him in cold monosyllables, she even came into his presence as rarely as she could. He watched her all those long lamplit evenings of September, so pale and silent, bending over her work. One night he read aloud to his mother some Russian political news; they very seldom mentioned politics in the presence of the girls and their governess.

"The country seems quieter now," said Madame Scobeleff. "The Nihilists are frightened into their holes and corners. They seem to recognize that the Czar bears a charmed life and that the assassin is powerless against him."

"But they are not in their holes and corners," rejoined Basil. "They are not all in Siberia and Saghalien. It is a terrible thing to think that from the Czar downwards no one is safe from them. The wife of one's bosom, the servant who waits at table, the man who drives your *fiacre*, any of them may be the concealed foe. So persistent, so relentless are they that neither pity nor fear touches them. The Czar will fall a victim yet, though they seem so quiet. But I believe that, if they do succeed in killing him, they will kill themselves too in the act. The Czarewitch will make them feel his little finger to be thicker than his father's loins. The emperor will give his life as a sacrifice, and peace and safety will spring from the soil watered by his blood!"

Basil had never said so much on the subject before. Vera and Olga were playing a duet, a low dreamy waltz, and did not hear; certainly she could not understand, for Basil had spoken in Russ. Her fingers were not moving—she was probably counting stitches. Suddenly Olga played a false chord, harsh and loud, which would have jarred on the least sensitive nerves. Helen started as if from a trance, and knocked over a reel of cotton which had been close to her elbow. She stooped to pick it up; Basil stooped too, so quickly that she could not avoid the consequence. His hand touched hers. She started violently from him, and this time shuddered so that her whole frame was visibly moved. Then she fainted away in her chair.

"Dear, dear," lamented Madame Scobeleff, "I am afraid she is a very delicate girl! Lady Dundas never told me, which was scarcely honest on her part. I wonder what upset her this time? There has been no thunder for weeks, and I am sure she has eaten nothing that could disagree with her. No doubt, poor thing, she was feeling ill all the evening and did not like to complain."

"I think she has bad nights," said Vera—they had returned from the bed where Helen had been laid until she came round, and she had promised to try to sleep. "Once or twice lately I thought I heard her talking to herself; but you know I am never very wide awake during the night, and there is a passage between our room and hers."

Basil offered no opinion. He thought of the electric thrill that his hand had given to hers when they touched, and he thought, Was a concealed and crushed-down love the cause of it all? Did she really love him, and try to trample it out, either thinking she had given it unsought, or from fear of Madame Scobeleff's anger? All the tenderness, all the hitherto unsounded depths of his heart had been stirred when he had held her those few minutes, helpless, unconscious, in his arms. He knew now that he could not live without her love; he would take the first opportunity of knowing the best or the worst, no matter what the consequences might be.

It was the 17th of September, the day dedicated in the Russian calendar to the popular saints Sophia Vera, Nadejda, and Lubove, or Faith, Hope, and Charity, a day kept with general rejoicing in Russia, for almost every family has members who bear one or more of these names. Madame Scobeleff had taken the name of Nadejda when she was received into the Greek Church on her marriage, and it was Vera's feast-day too. So, holiday was proclaimed, and an expedition to Ellen's Isle on Loch Katrine arranged.

Unfortunately Madame Scobeleff felt too unwell to go when the day came, clear and cloudless, with the low soft sunshine of the dying summer bathing the hills and bringing out the rich harmonies of color, purple and russet, olive and gray. Olga insisted on

staying with her, in spite of her protestations that she required rest and quiet, and not nursing. But Vera must keep her feast-day with proper solemnity; so she, Helen, and Basil set off together.

They drove to Stronachlachar in a carriage full of tourists, through the wild country where the Macgregors had hidden in the clefts of the rock. Ben Lomond faded into distance, and Benvenue and Ben Ledi came nearer. Then they waited by Loch Katrine until the steamer came up, and merrily criticised their fellow-travelers, not one of whom had escaped Vera's sharp eyes. Helen laughed and talked too; the air and the sunshine and the swift motion of the carriage had affected her; she had never been so girlish and light-hearted. She even chatted to Basil, making little jokes like Vera.

But, when they steamed in among the lovely islands, each rising like a fairy bower from the bosom of the loch and floating on its glassy surface, every leaf of birch and hazel, every trail of ivy repeated faithfully in the sunlit mirror, Helen became silent and grave again; and, when Basil took her hand to assist her in disembarking, he could feel its coldness through her glove.

Vera was crazy about ferns, and chose rather to hunt for them in the Trossachs woods than to sentimentalize on Ellen's Isle. So they left the tourists, who went to refresh themselves at the picturesque gray-walled hotel, and lost themselves in the wondrous "unfathomable glade" from which the unvarying greenness of summer had gone and over which autumn's royal mantle of scarlet and gold was flung. The light quivering birch and aspen, the great gnarled oak, the yellowing ash bearing its heavy clusters of fruit, and the dark funereal banners of the pine—all formed an impenetrable arcade of varied hues.

Vera, if not more active, was more fearless than Helen, more reckless of her boots and dress. She climbed into all manner of impossible nooks, tearing her stout serge and her gloveless hands, soaking her feet and soiling her elbows, in her ardent quest, utterly regardless of consequences.

Helen was tired, but tried to follow. But, in crossing a small mountain-stream that hurled itself, foaming and roaring, down its tiny gorge, her foot slipped; and she would have fallen in had not Basil held her in his strong ready arms. Vera was far out of sight; they were quite alone in the glen. He did not take away his arm; he drew her to him, trembling as she was, like the aspens over their head. She could not move in that close embrace.

"Helen," he whispered, gazing down at her golden head, with all the fierce wild passion of his half-tamed race burning in his eyes, "do you love me? You shall not escape until you tell me."

Then she cried—a muffled cry of great agony:—

"It is the will of Heaven! I cannot help it—I cannot do it. I must die!"

Basil was so agitated, so amazed at her extraordinary words, that he did not notice the more extraordinary fact that they were spoken in Russ. He had spoken in French, and continued in that tongue, trying to soothe her incomprehensible distress. Her habit of self-control resumed its sway. She ceased to sob, but trembled so that Basil had still to support her lest she should fall.

"Tell me—will you love me? Do you love me now?" he said.

"Oh, Heaven," she cried, "I do—I do! I have tried—I have fought. I am weak—I could not stand out! The die is cast—it is all over!"

"Dear, what strange words you say! Surely such an answer was never given to man before! What is over? For me everything begins."

Helen made a strong effort, and at last managed to speak calmly, looking with frightened eyes at Basil, but no longer shrinking from him.

"What have I said?" she asked in low anxious tones. "You have misunderstood. Life begins for me too to-day," and she smiled; but it was a sad smile, more of contented resignation than of happy love. "One cannot over-ride one's destiny; can one?"

"I hope one can," said Basil, "at least if mine is the destiny that was foretold to me in my childhood. See—there is our star rising upon us!"

He guided her eyes to the evening star that was hanging over Ben Ledi, blazing with unusual lustre in the eastern sky.

"We must run, or we shall miss the boat. Where is Vera?" she said.

At that moment Vera opportunely appeared, laden with roots, and foliage and soft damp soil, all torn and stained from her explorations. They had to walk fast, and therefore could not talk, and just caught the steamer returning to Stronachlachar. Vera

was too tired to notice how silent her companions were, and busied herself with disentangling her ferns from the encumbering earth. It was nearly dark when they met their own boat at Inversnaid, and were rowed across the deep water, under the solemn stars.

Helen sat in the stern, silent, awed by the weird shadows on the loch and the mountain-side. The others were silent too—only the regular plash of the oars sounded in their ears in the dim light. Helen's thoughts and Basil's, though widely different, yet tended to the same end—absolute secrecy must be maintained.

"It will make no end of awkwardness for her, poor little one, if we declare ourselves to be formally engaged," thought Basil. "The mother will send her off immediately without a character. It is a delicate subject, and she may think I am ashamed of her; but I must make the best of it."

Vera rushed into the drawing-room, wet and dirty and ragged, displaying her treasures. But Madame Scobeleff was cross, partly from not feeling well, partly from uneasiness at the idea of Basil and Helen being in such close proximity for a whole day.

"Countess Vera Pavlovna," she exclaimed, "one would think you were a laborer's daughter! I am afraid your governess has neglected her charge."

The rebuke, with the title, which was designed to impress upon Helen the wide difference of rank between them, failed in its aim. Helen had waited a minute behind Vera to speak to Basil.

"I rely upon you," she said, "to treat what has been said to-day as purely confidential. Let it be a secret between us for a time."

Even had he not been most unexpectedly relieved by her request, he could not have resisted the tender, pleading eyes. He kissed her, saying:—

"It shall be as you please, my beloved."

He could not sleep that night; his dreams, short and fitful, were full of vague terror. His mind was over-strained, his body overfatigued, he thought, so he gave up the pursuit of "Nature's sweet restorer," and lay looking at the moonbeams that came pouring through his uncurtained window. He was extremely superstitious, like all Russians; the room seemed full of ghosts and rustling and warning whispers. The evening star over Ben Lomond blazed in his excited imagination like a terrible portent of evil.

What sound was that, low but distinct, in the deep silence of the night? He listened. He had not imagined it, for he heard again—a sharp shrill note like a whistle, but so very low and quick. It was not repeated, and he made up his mind that he had fancied it, and lay more quietly on his pillows, for surely sleep was coming at last. Then suddenly he sat up, every sense clear and intensely active, for a soft footstep had passed his door, and presently the outer door was opened, so gently that only his ears, always unusually keen, and now strained to their utmost sensibility, could have heard.

He rose and went to the window. There, in the shadow of the ash tree, he could dimly discern two figures, but whether they were those of men or women he could not see. They kept close under the house where it was darkest; he could hear nothing. He waited, and the moon passed behind a cloud, making the darkness deeper. When the moon came out into the purple sky, both figures had vanished.

"One of the servants and a lover," he said to himself; but he knew only too much of dark midnight plotting, and he watched by the window until the dawn appeared in the sky and Ben Lomond blushed in the rosy light, and the birds woke among the heather and saluted the new-born day.

The two, man and woman, had left the garden by a side gate, and gone to a lonely spot on the hills behind the house, quite near, but hidden from observation by a great gray bowlder. They were talking in Russ, in low feverish whispers, as if they dreaded that the birds of the air would carry the matter.

"Oh, I cannot, I cannot!" she sobbed, wringing her hands.

"Then you have forgotten your father, Elena Ivanoff, rotting away, heart and body, in the marshes of Saghalien. You have forgotten your mother's broken heart, your home ruined, your young life blighted, by these Scobeleffs. You have forgotten your own vow of vengeance and the patient five years that you have waited till the time should be ripe. You could school yourself to the daily drudgery of teaching; you could force yourself to study a language and master it, so that no ear could detect that you

were not English. And so far all has gone well—your victim is in your hands; yet you shrink like a coward from fulfilling your mission; you can forget!"

"No, no, Ephrem; I have not forgotten—I cannot forget. But at least let it not be my hand that takes his life! I will give him up to you, traitress that I am—only save me from doing the deed."

"Elena, you know you ask me in vain. You yourself drew the lot, rejoicing in the good fortune that made you the avenger of your father. No one can be your substitute. And if you fail, you know the consequence."

"It is only death," she said, "Oh, that I had died before to-day! that the lightning had killed him! And I grudged that he should die by the visitation of Heaven, defrauding me of my right to slay my father's murderer!"

"You have turned very tender-hearted, Elena," sneered the man. "One might almost imagine that you had come to love this man, but that that were impossible. Listen. You have been too long already; you have disregarded our letters; he will take alarm and escape. You are only a woman, and though you have schooled yourself admirably to play your part, your nerves cannot always be quite under your control. I give you three days. If it is not done by then, tremble for yourself!"

She returned to the house by another door—there was no locking up at night in that peaceful spot—and she sat watching the dawn in a stony stillness, while she made up her mind what to do.

"O love, love, love, I will save you yet!" she murmured.

She opened a box, always close and strongly locked, and yet at first sight it seemed to contain nothing but lace frills, ribbons, and a few sheets of note-paper. At the bottom lay a long thin parcel.

She shivered as she saw it, then slowly unfolded the many coverings. It was a bright steel poniard, very narrow in the blade, with a delicately wrought handle. She looked at it sadly, regretfully.

"I have given it up," she said—"my vengeance; and now I must give up my love and my life. My death is certain, but he may be saved yet; so I must not die to-night. If I bought my life for his, Heaven will be merciful."

She passed a day of agonized delay, until she found out a way to carry out her plan in safety. In the evening, returning from shooting, Basil met a little ragged boy far away in a glen, who gave him a letter.

"Where did you get it?" he asked, but received an answer too confused and in a language too unfamiliar to Basil's ears for him to understand it.

He opened the letter and read it. It was very short, and was in the Russian language.

"Go from here at once—your life is in immediate danger! Keep your destination a secret from your nearest and dearest! Be warned! A FRIEND."

Then they had tracked him hither, and he must fly for his life again! After the first shock, the idea became as familiar to him as if it had happened every day. He went home, packed a portmanteau, and waited to catch the steamer from Inversnaid. He did not have the pain of a parting from Helen; she was out with Olga, and time was too precious to waste. He did not tell his mother; but she guessed, being too well accustomed to such hurried departures.

"I have to go to Balloch at once on business," he said. "I may go by Stirling or by Glasgow. I don't know. My love to Olga. Remember me to Miss Johnstone, and say good-by for me. I shall see you all again soon. You leave here in ten days. I will write to London and appoint where we shall meet."

But that very night Helen heard the mysterious call beneath her window.

"To-night!" she thought. "Have they found out already, or do they only distrust me? So be it! Heaven grant that he has escaped!"

She took the dagger from her box and hid it in her breast. She hung a picture of the Virgin Mother round her neck, kissing it as she did so. She knelt in the moonlight and said a prayer. Then came the second sharp little whistle. She rose from her knees, making the sign of the cross, and went out.

The moon shone with its weird unearthly splendor over the hills and the loch; the whole world was hushed in slumber. She walked quickly and firmly to her trysting-place, her head erect, like a martyr to her doom. The moonlight shone upon the marble rigidity of her beautiful face, death-like in its pallor, and cast its sheen over her uncovered golden head. She held her shawl tightly round her; but it was from the nerv-

ous strain of her muscles, not because she could feel the cold of the September night.

"Traitress!" was the word that greeted her. "You dare to come, knowing what you have done? You have let him escape—now, at the last minute, when he was in your power!"

She did not see that Ephrem knew not that she had warned him. She heard only the word "traitress," and she knew well what was the inevitable doom of treason to the cause.

"I dared to come," she said, "because I knew too well that neither walls nor friends nor distance could protect me from your vengeance. Kill me to-night. It must come sooner or later; so shorten my anguish by doing it at once."

"You helped him, you warned him!" cried the man. "Fool! Did you think he could escape us? You have only thrown away your own life!"

But life is very dear when it seems to be on the point of vanishing forever. As all the story of the past rises up before a drowning man in his last moments, so did all the infinite possibility of the future rise before Helen as she stood that minute in the moonlight. Basil might escape and hide himself beyond the reach of Nihilist conspiracy, and better times might come. They might be married, and in a long and happy life forget the terrors of the past. Basil would use his influence with the Czar, and bring back her father from his fearful captivity, his weary exile in Saghalien, if he still lived.

She saw the murderous eyes upon her, the murderous hands seeking a weapon. She drew the poniard from her bosom, and it flashed in the moonlight for one moment. Then it was seized by a stronger hand, and plunged into her own breast.

And they found her in the morning, with the sunbeams playing over her, the gentle heather-scented breeze ruffling her golden hair—with the dagger in her heart.

A few days after there was wilder weeping and wailing in the white house by the loch than there had been since Clan-Alpine had devastated those shores by fire and sword; for the news came that Count Basil Scobeleff had been cruelly murdered in a railway-carriage by an unknown hand, stabbed to the heart by another narrow steel poniard, round the hilt of which was twisted a paper bearing the words in Russian:—

"Thus perish the enemies of Freedom! Vain is it to attempt to escape from the doom we decree!"

A TRUE SNAKE-STORY.

BY DR. A. STRADLING.

I LABEL mine so, because the vast majority of snake-stories are untrue—palpably and absurdly untrue to those who have studied anything of the nature or habits of the creatures to which they professedly refer. They pass muster, however, in many instances because so little is known of the manners and customs of reptiles in general and of serpents in particular; and it is extraordinary to note how even the best scientific works on natural history, while accurately describing the anatomical and physiological characteristics of a snake, will yet frequently perpetuate and lend authority to the most vulgar errors in alluding to their mode of life. Again, such is the terror which these "creeping things" inspire, that in many cases where it is impossible to doubt the *bona fides* of the narrator, ridiculously distorted and impossible versions of actual phenomena are given through hurried and horrified observation.

To most people, the very term "snake" or "serpent"—for their signification is the same—conjures up the idea of a creature fiendish in cruelty and aggressively inimical to man, gifted with a deadly venom, speed for pursuit, and unutterable malevolence. Yet the poor ophidian is only too desirous to shun notice—I believe there is absolutely no exception to this rule—where he has time and opportunity, though he is frequently surprised, and compelled to act on the defensive, owing to his want of hearing and defective vision. Probably no serpent can see anything distinctly at a distance of three

times his own length, though they may be conscious of interception of light, or feel the vibration of an approaching footstep. Certainly, no words can exaggerate the awful power of the poisons of some of the more virulent species—I say poisons, because there may be as many separate and individual venoms as there are venomous kinds, for anything we know to the contrary; though, in considering this most mysterious attribute, we might pause to compare the effects of the tiny, almost microscopic hair-tubules of a tropical nettle, producing violent fever of the whole system, with, possibly, gangrene of the stung limb, or those chemicals which affect the human tissues when subdivided into millionths of a grain. But few know—and perhaps fewer still will believe—that of the whole number of serpent species known in the world, less than one-eighth only are venomous, and that one-fourth of these are never seen on land, being inhabitants of the ocean.

Snakes, moreover, seem to be deemed fair game for fiction and falsehood by common consent, and so generally is this fact recognized that the term "snake-story" has passed into a byword and a reproach, an epithet which is well understood and acknowledged as a euphemism for that which requires considerably more than the proverbial grain of salt for its deglutition.

Before relating my true snake-story, let me offer a sample of the other band—the "snake story" which is not true. I clipped it from a paper published in the very country in which the scene of the other is located, Guiana.

A boa-constrictor woke up thin and hungry after a three months' nap, and set off to look for his breakfast. He was soon rewarded by the capture of an agouti, which he crushed and bolted whole, after the manner of his kind. His appetite being not yet appeased, he went still farther in quest of prey, and presently coming to a fence and essaying to pass through between the stakes, he was stopped midway by the lump in his body which was the outward and visible sign of the defunct but undigested agouti. As he lay in this position, another agouti happened to wander in cautiously near his nose, and was seized, constricted, and swallowed in like manner. Agouti number two passes down the serpent's body to join its predecessor, but was stopped on the other side of the fence; and the state of affairs now was that the boa could neither go ahead nor astern, being jammed by his fore-and-aft inside passengers; and in that situation was found, caught, killed, and made into a "snake story."

For the truth of what follows I can vouch, as all the collateral and corroborative circumstances, though not the main incident, came directly under my personal notice.

The wife of one of the overseers on the Enmore estate in Demerara had one morning laid her baby asleep in its cradle while she performed certain household duties. Enmore is—or was at the time of which I write—the largest sugar-plantation in that country, for so are the three provinces called which together make up British Guiana—namely, Demerara, Berbice, and Essequibo. The estate has a station on the little line which runs through several small towns, still bearing their quaint old Dutch names, as far as Mahaica. The baby aforesaid was carefully screened from the blazing heat of the day within a cool green-jalousied veranda, and was lightly covered with a muslin net, to guard its slumbers against the disturbing influence of flies, marabundas, scorpions, spiders, and other small but unpleasant insects of which this favored land is the happy hunting-ground. It was three months old, and was the pivot on which the daily life and love of both parents revolved. I regret to say that I have forgotten whether it was a boy or a girl.

Picture to yourself, then, if you can, the horror of the young mother when, on stealing into the veranda to refresh herself with a peep at her unconscious darling, she beheld on the muslin cover a live serpent! She had not been long in the colony, but had already sufficient experience of its teeming reptilian fauna to recognize the blood-red, blunt-headed creature which lay on her child as a coral snake, reputed to be so deadly as to slay a man or horse with its bite in twenty minutes. It had apparently fallen into the cradle from the ledge of the Venetian shutter above, and its weight causing the muslin to bag down, it was unable to raise its body high enough to get over the edge of the wicker-work and escape, as it seemed to be endeavoring to do.

Terror-stricken as she was, the poor girl by a desperate effort summoned up all her self-control and remained still, knowing that if the baby were disturbed it might by its movement provoke the snake to strike.

After watching the ineffectual efforts of the latter to climb the side of the cradle for a few moments, which seemed like hours, an idea flew over her half-numbed brain. She crept gently forward, inch by inch, until by stretching forth one foot she could touch the rocker. Getting her toe underneath this, she slowly raised it until the basket was tilted considerably away from her, and was consequently lowered on the side towards which the intruder was directing its attempts at ascent. The plan succeeded admirably; the unsuspicious serpent wriggled its way up the now moderately inclined plane of the net, retarded in its progress only by the unstable hold afforded by the latter. Its head was already over the edge, and in another quarter of a minute it would have been upon the floor, when the treacherous rocker slipped from her foot, the snake rolled back lower than before, carrying the edge of the narrow curtain down in its fall, and the mother stumbled wildly to recover her nearly lost balance. It was too much for her; the awful tension snapped, and she called her husband's name with a hoarse cry.

Well that she did! He was nearing the house at the time on his homeward way to midday breakfast, and just caught sound of that agonized whisper as he crossed the muddy canal. A few seconds later he was in the veranda, reading his wife's bloodless face with wild questioning eyes. No speech could she force through her hot lips; no word spoke he, but he followed her outstretched finger as she pointed to the still swaying cradle. With one dash he seized the muslin and tore it off. Had this been done at first, no doubt all would have been well, but the free border being within the side, the light net slipped from under the weight of the snake, which fell hissing and writhing upon the naked body of the child, now crying and lifting up its hands towards its mother. There was no moment for thought. Like lightning he gripped the infant by the shoulder and threw it out on the floor, where it fell with a broken collar-bone, but saved!

And it was through being called upon to administer restoratives to the wife and to treat this injury—which may have been caused by the fall; or, more probably, by the frenzied grasp of his powerful hand—that I, in the absence of my friend, Dr. D——, whose guest I was, learned the foregoing particulars within ten minutes of their occurrence. The snake was already despatched, and lay on the veranda boards with its head smashed flat by an unnecessarily tremendous stamp of the paternal heel. I may just say that youth and a good constitution, in which the Morayshire breezes were not yet dissipated by fever and ague, enabled the mother to throw off the nervous illness with which she was threatened; and that, although the condition of the child's shoulder and the pain attending it naturally caused the parents great grief, it recovered perfectly without any impairment of the use of the arm. The fragments of the snake were gathered up and preserved in a glass jar of white rum from the factory "still"; and long afterwards, as he told the tale, the Scotchman's lips would grow white with anger. And I daresay that it moves him so to this day.

For I had not the heart to tell him that the creature was harmless, and that he had broken the baby's collar-bone over a poor worm who could do less injury than a mosquito. Fervently do I hope that they have never learned it. I think the reptile could hardly have been recognized after its immersion in the coarse *canha;* but as it lay recently dead, there was no mistaking it for anything else than *Scytale coronatum*, a species of somewhat vivid color, inhabiting tropical America and some of the West India Islands, but wholly devoid of venom. The error is typical of a very common one in popular nomenclature. The really poisonous coral snakes of these countries should properly be called "corral," as their name was originally derived from the Spanish by reason of their colors, vermilion, black, yellow, and white, being disposed in "rings" around their bodies. (The intensity of their lethal power, by the way, is much exaggerated, the great viperine serpents of those regions, such as the rattlesnake, *fer-de-lance*, and bushmaster, being much more virulent.) But by corruption the term "coral" has come to be applied to any snake which bears some degree of red in its coloration, and has carried a venomous reputation along with it. If there were anything in a name, one would be compelled to admit that this same *coronatum* should be the coral snake, par excellence, seeing that the whole of the upper surface of its body presents the brilliant hue of that gem. "Corral," however, it could not be, as the color is plain without pattern from stem to stern.

AT THE RIGHT TIME.

BY LOUISE DUPRE.

THE shadow of Squire Sargent's brick house was long on the front yard when Miss Lydia Sargent, the squire's only daughter, stepped out of the front door, and wended her way briskly up the hill toward the meeting-house, with a music book under her arm. Since her return from boarding-school, she had attained the proud position of organist, and, though it was only a parlor organ which she exercised her skill upon, as the instrument was new, the gift of a summer visitor in town, and organs were not plenty in the region, Miss Lydia had a great zeal for practicing, and was looked upon as a very important person in the community. She was a fair musician, too, and enjoyed the roll and swell of the melody, which her strong, white fingers sent trembling through the reeds, more than the society of the village folks, young or old, even that of her confidential friend, Miss Lily White, the doctor's daughter.

It was a sunny, melting afternoon in the first of April. Nothing could be greener than the budding grass in the warm valleys and under the sheltering cares of the homesteads. Crocuses winked in the village gardens, and saucy bluebirds chattered in the tall elm-trees and the reddening maples.

Lydia, catching a glimpse of some yellow willow tassels blowing across a brook in the roadside meadow, immediately scaled the wall, and proceeded to adorn her black hair with their bright feathery sprays. The brook made a most satisfactory mirror, and the girl leaned over it with a childish delight in beholding how fair she was, her large gray eyes dilated with pleasure, and filled with a soft, humid lustre, the dimples showing about the smiling curves of her lips, and the brilliant color of her dark brunette cheek heightened and made rich by contrast with the yellow tassels that drooped from her glossy braids, touching the small, perfect ears, and the round, full neck. She was, indeed, as bright and beautiful as some lovely spirit of the spring.

But as the poet says, "The lark is not always smiling and flushed and happy." On ordinary occasions, when her cheek was pale, her large, heavy-lidded eyes downcast, her unsmiling mouth wore the usual expression of dreamy discontent, and she had not brightened her black hair with yellow bloom, you would have perhaps remarked, on first beholding her, a fine-looking young woman; for her figure was tall and stately, and her head was set upon her shoulders just as a sculptor would have done it, if he had accomplished his dream. But who had once seen her at her best never forgot it; she was always beautiful thereafter.

"But it is of no use, I shall not see my fate to-day," she said laughing, but with a little long-drawn sigh, as she climbed the fence, and went on her way along the road.

The sexton and the shoemaker, being about to "swap horses," were driving together toward the village. Lydia met them on the brow of the hill, and bowed with a much more gracious smile than usual.

"Harnsom girl," said the sexton, looking after her, with a pleased expression of countenance.

"Oh, yes; looks well enough as fur as that goes, but they say she's a dretful thorn in the squire's side. He's sot on her marryin' Tom Davis, yer see. He's a good, stiddy, likely feller, smart as a steel trap too, 'n' he's got a thousand dollars in the bank. The squire, he's in debt, 'n' Davis would be glad to help him, but the girl, so folks say, thinks he ain't genteel enough for her. I was saying to Cinthy t' other day that I thought store-keeping was next to bein' a minister fur gentility; but, lor', you can't tell what notions will get into these high-flying girls' heads! Liddy's just like her mother's family. The Pendexters was nigh about all old maids because they couldn't find anybody high-up enough to marry, 'n' she 'll foller in their footsteps, mark my words."

"Sho!" said the sexton, who was a man of few words, evidently pondering deeply upon the subject.

And just at that moment, though Lydia had certainly caught no word of the conversation, the thought of Mr. Davis entered her head, also. She remembered, for the first time to-day, that she had promised to give this gentleman his final answer to-morrow. But that was more than three weeks

ago, and to-day was so full of springtime and promise, that unhappy things were crowded out of her mind, and she had felt an exhilaration of spirits which she could hardly account for, but which old Granny Jones, the herb-gatherer and tea-cup fortune-teller in the village, would have called a "turrible lucky presentiment."

"Well, I have thought of it enough to give me gray hairs, already," said she to herself, "and I won't think of it to-day. I'll laugh a while. I shall have mickle time to grieve. To-night, I'll lie awake and consider it over and over again. But, though I would like to please father, I do not think I care enough for him to marry him. I know he is good, and is fond of me, and all that, and perhaps it would be better if I were to make up my mind to do so; but oh, dear, if there is such a thing as real love, what a dreadful thing it will be to miss it."

There was no fire in the ancient meeting-house, but through the large windows, which were undarkened by blind or shade, the sun was streaming with a warm radiance, and Lydia felt no chill in the atmosphere, as she climbed the creaking stairs which led to the gallery. Seating herself at the instrument, she played fitfully all the long afternoon. Deep, low-toned chords broke impressively on the stillness, then some clear, joyous choral set all the sleepy echoes ringing, and then the girl, with strange effect, would mingle her own passionate young voice with the dreary wail of some funeral old hymn, such as was sung of a Sunday by the choir.

And, in the meantime, the shadows were growing longer in the lane which led to the highway, and it was already night under the dark pine-trees which dotted the graveyard.

The few sunbeams, which still fell slantwise on the railings of the old square pews, were pale and faint, and a gale was commencing to blow, such as is common in spring evenings, clearing the sky of clouds until it looks unnaturally bare and pallid. The branch of a tall elm-tree tapped smartly on the window-pane by her side, and Lydia started violently. She had been sojourning in the clouds, and came back to earth with disagreeable suddenness. Her watch said that it was half-past six, and to close the organ, and to scramble down the stair-way, already dusky and full of rustling, ghostly night sounds, was the work of an instant. But what was her dismay on trying the door to find that she had left the key on the outside, and the lock had sprung, as it had a habit of doing when the door was closed with anything like violence. Though she was perfectly well aware that her efforts in this direction would be unavailing, she shook and pounded at the door until breath and strength failed, when, taking a calmer view of the situation, it occurred to her, with a sense of relief, that nothing would be easier than to go down-stairs into the vestry, and escape by way of one of the ground windows. But she found the only entrance which led to this lower region securely locked, and, though she used all her strength to force it open, it yielded not a jot to her frantic efforts. Her heart sank within her, for the prospect of spending the night alone in that ghostly old church was anything but agreeable, and the prospect seemed inevitable.

It was situated in a very retired locality on a hill that arose between two villages, like a hump on a giant's back. Only those who came to the church, or to the burying-ground which slept on one side of the building, ever entered the lane which turned away from the road; and, at this season, the road itself was seldom troubled after sundown, with the exception of Saturdays or "mill days," when the farmers, who lived beyond, and were called "back folks," came to the village to replenish their stock of groceries or to carry home their grain. It was very unlikely that any stray traveler would pass that way to-night, and certainly no one would think of coming to the meeting-house, unless it might be some of the family come in search of her, and there was small chance of any such happening as that. Lydia was not accustomed to give any account of her intentions at home, and, if she were missed at the tea-table, it was generally supposed that it had suited her pleasure to spend the night with her friend Lily, who lived at the other end of the village. The nearest dwelling-house was half a mile away, and only the chimney was visible from the meeting-house windows. The mill was only a stone's-throw down in the hollow, but the mill was silent, and the miller was away.

Lydia opened one of the creaking, small-paned windows, and, thrusting her head out into the air, screamed with all her might, swinging her red shawl at the same time as a signal of distress. But only the wind answered her cries, not a human being was in sight. The twilight was growing into dusk, and shadows, in all sorts of fantastic and

ghostly shapes, cast from the blowing limbs of trees, and who knows what besids, flecked the wall and floor. Lydia was a young woman not unmingled with heroic stuff. She might have shown bravery and daring even on a battlefield. She would have met a burglar with comparative calmness. Dangers by flood or fire would never have appalled her. She viewed lightning with complacency, and once braved the fury of a mad bull to save a little child. But there was an element of superstition in her nature, and she fairly shivered with fear as her eyes wandered about this ancient interior, which seemed uncanny, even in the broad daylight, when the sun was streaming over the time-worn walls.

The wind made a dismal sound in the trees, which drooped over the old, old stones in the burying-ground. A dreary bird called to its mate, and the answer came more dreary still from the deep pine shadows over a tomb, and the dreariest brook that ever found voice ran sobbing beside the wall. The moon drifted slowly into view from behind the hill, and a pale beam stole into the high old pulpit, and sat like a ghost in the penitential-looking chair. If the place had been dark, it would not have been half so awesome, but the white glare of the uncurtained windows made the shadows, which hid in the deep pews, and stalked about in dusky corners, more eerie. They seemed to rustle like the folds of garments, to waver like human forms.

Lydia thought of all the old ghost stories connected with the ancient building, which were still told by the village gossips around the fire of a winter's night. Of how the ghost of old Granny Tompkins had appeared at one of these same bare windows, gazing with reproachful, half-threatening eyes at the trembling and terror-stricken minister, who stood in the pulpit at the dusk of the short autumn days. He had refused to admit her to the communion table, because she was said to quarrel with her husband, though many of her neighbors declared that the accusation was unjust. Of the ghost, who was once supposed to inhabit the creaking old belfry, and rang the cracked bell on the stillest nights, till it shivered on the trembling ears of the villagers, and startled the town across the river.

The night was chilly and bleak as nights in early spring often are, but she dared not close the window, dared not leave it for an instant, for the turnpike was so far away, that wheels might rumble by and escape her ears. She wrapped her shawl tightly about her, and crouching on her knees, sat there hour after hour. It was on the side of the house which looked away from the graveyard, but some horrible fascination caused her to turn her head in that direction, and watch the wavering of the tall, ghostly trees, whose dark tops made shadows on the panes.

The door which led to the belfry creaked mysteriously, closed with a bang, and there was a rustle like stealthy footsteps in the dark corridor. Then there was a sound as of something falling, over her head, and an awesome echo answered the sound from its remote hiding-place. And underneath and overhead and on every side, the wind uttered weird noises, which sounded like moans. Lydia shivered, and, burying her face in her hands, waited, expecting every moment to feel the touch of some ghostly hand on her head, to hear some ghostly whisper in her ear. The blood seemed chilled in her veins, her very lips were stiff and cold.

Then with a sudden effort, she sat upright, and took a resolute look around her.

"I will not be such a coward," she said.

And, to make her words good, she commenced to hum a rollicking air from "Pinafore." There fell, immediately, a great silence; were the ghosts, was even the wind which haunted this place of hymns and devout prayers, shocked at these sounds profane? But what wavering, tremulous sounds they were, and how strange. It seemed impossible to Lydia that she could be using her own voice. It affected her as the song of the sea affected the poet, as something "too mysterious to be joy," and she willingly gave place to the ghostly rustles once more.

The village lights, which, with one or two exceptions, had climbed to upper windows, went out one by one. It was half-past nine o'clock. Lydia took out her watch which ticked so loudly, so slowly, and the moonlight showed her the hands, and even they looked ghostly, and their counting of the hours seemed like something awfully uncanny. There was one bright and steady light burning in Farmer White's keeping-room, and she thought, with a little sense of cheer, that this would not be likely to disappear until toward the small hours, for Sallie White had a sweetheart, and they "sat up" three evenings in a week.

It was too late to have a shadow of hope of escaping from her prision that night, and, leaning her head on the cushioned railing of the gallery, she tried to sleep. The gallery, though dark and dingy, was walled in by red moreen curtains, and was far less awesome than the broad, barn-like region below. But, as the night wore on, the noises and the shapes grew more and more eerie. In Lydia's excited imagination, she actually felt cold touches upon her shoulder, and the folds of light garments brush her bowed cheek. It was twelve o'clock. The moon still shone in the clear sky, but the wind was subsiding, leaving a stillness which was only broken by occasional gusts and unaccountable creaking.

Lydia shivered like a leaf. She hardly knew whether from cold or fear. A hymn book fell from the rack at the other end of the gallery with a dull, disagreeable thud, and she was sure, yes, perfectly sure, that she heard stealthy, creeping footfalls in that direction. She rose to her feet, but kept her hands pressed tightly over her eyes. She felt that her situation was desperate, but she never remembered just what she was about to do, for, just at that moment, the sound of wheels on the bridge, just over the bow of the hill, reached her ears; and, rushing to the window, she reached her head as far as possible into the air, and screamed with all her might, screamed as if her life depended upon it, as if some horrible fate were about to overtake her, and only immediate and powerful aid would be of any avail. And what innumerable echoes flung back her frantic cries. First one distant hill answered, then another, and another, until it seemed as if all the sleepy gods in the country were awakened. The wheels ceased to rumble for a moment, then, oh, joyful moment! they turned into the lane which led to the meeting-house, and Lydia soon had the satisfaction of viewing with her own eyes a light, covered buggy drawn by a bay horse. It never once occurred to her who the driver might be, whether robber or mysterious traveler or one of her own town's people, belated by some unlooked-for happening. She only wished to be released from that horriby ghostly place. Robber, tramp, even murderer, would have been welcome at that shivering moment. She groped her way down-staire, and stood by the door.

"The key is on the outside," she shoutcd. "I got locked in by accident."

And in a few moments, a tall and rather startled but resolute-looking young man stood before her. The moonlight fell full in her face, but he was somewhat in the shadow.

"What is it?" he inquired, in an anxious but rather bewildered tone.

"Nothing, now. But, oh, it was terrible in the meeting-house! I am so thankful that you came. Take me home, or," suddenly coming to her senses, in some slight degree, "I—I think I can walk home by myself. I am afraid of nothing in the open air."

The young man, who had been greatly startled by her terrified shrieks, and expected to find nothing less than the scene of some direful tragedy, regarded her with mingled amazement and admiration. A rich flood of color had rushed into her pale, intense face. Her large gray eyes, upturned to his own, were filled with startled brilliancy. The coils of her long, dark hair, in which the yellow willow tassels still clung, were loosened and falling on her neck, her full red lips trembled like those of a child. Her scarlet shawl was folded about her with a rare grace. She looked like some lovely Ophelia, wonderfully beautiful, but with a mind diseased.

"I came here to practice on the organ," said she, still shivering, "but forgot to remove the key from the lock on the outside of the door, and, when I closed it, the lock sprung."

The young man's face lightened with a look of relief. Perhaps it was not a case of insanity after all. But what a strange adventure, and who would dream of finding so elegant and high-bred looking a young woman in such an isolated and decidedly rural region?

Lydia attempted to descend the high flight of wooden steps, but, for the first time in her life, burst into a fit of hysterical sobbing, and was obliged to accept the support of the stranger.

"I do not wonder that you were frightened," said he, consolingly. "I should not have liked it, myself. If ever place were haunted, this is surely the one."

And he looked up towards the preternaturally white old building, each window staring like so many ghostly eyes, with the dark graveyard with its awesome black stones at one side, the wind whispering, rustling, tapping on the branches of its evergreen trees,

and the moonbeams finding its forlornest places to gleam upon.

"If you will allow me to take you home, I shall be most happy to do so," he said.

And Lydia, without ado, so shaken by this new and startling attack, that she neither cared nor remembered that he was a perfect stranger, and might be the leader of a gang of robbers, for aught she knew, allowed him to assist her into the buggy.

By a mighty effort, she soon recovered herself sufficiently to appreciate the situation in some small degree, however, and was able to tell her name, and where she lived. But after one searching look in his fine, frank face, she was not afraid. And then he told her his name. It was John Foster, and he had been to Doncaster Four Corners to see Mr. Ethan Pendexter on business. Did she know, or had she heard of Mr. Ethan Pendexter?

Lydia rather thought she had, as he was her own uncle. At which Mr. Foster declared that he was delighted; indeed, he seemed to be more delighted than the occasion warranted.

The gentleman in question had been absent from home when he reached his house, and he had been much belated by waiting for him. Then he had been advised to take a shorter route to Greendale, from which place he was to take the early morning train to the city, and, by this means, he had lost his way, and had been utterly in the dark as regards his whereabouts, until he had seen on a sign-post not far beyond, two miles to Doncaster village. Was there a hotel or resting-place of any kind for man and beast in the village?

No, there was no hotel until you reached the corner, but her father would not hear of his going beyond their house that night. Their latch-string was always out; they very often entertained travelers.

Then they commenced to talk together like old friends, and in spite of the lateness of the hour, each was sorry when they reached the door of the flat-roofed, brick house, sleeping in the moonshine.

"Merciful providence, Lydia, what on earth!" exclaimed the squire, who, after a hasty toilette, appeared in answer to a very imperative summons from the old-fashioned knocker.

Lydia explained everything in as brief and clear a manner as possible, but her father, who had been startled from a sound sleep, was still in a profound state of bewilderment, and continued to exclaim, "What on earth, Lyddy," until finally, his sense of hospitality, which was very strong, overcame this difficulty, and he conducted himself with great cordiality.

"Couldn't think of 'lowing you to leave my door this time o' night," said he. "So you're up from the city on brother-in-law Pendexter's business. He's always gettin' into law. I knew your father well. When we were boys we went to the 'cademy together. You favor him considerably, handsomer perhaps, but most likely not nigh so smart. But what on earth, Liddy, how did you happen to get locked into the meetin'-house? It's a wonder to me that you wa'n't asleep in one of the cushioned pews before this hour: you know you were never afraid of anything. 'Twas cold 'n' lonesome enough, I s'pose, but it wouldn't ha' killed anybody to ha' stayed there a week."

Lydia blushed crimson, and hung her stately head. She wondered now, how she could have been so frightened, and was dreadfully ashamed of having made such an exhibition of her weakness to this handsome young stranger.

He noticed her embarrassment, and with quick tact, managed to turn the drift of the squire's mind in another direction.

There was a great heap of scarlet coals left in the sitting-room fireplace, and Lydia brought the coffee-pot, and set it to steaming in the glowing heat, and they made very merry over a dainty little lunch, which she prepared with her own fair hands, though it must be confessed that they were still rather shaky ones, and her eyes had not yet lost their startled expression.

"I never can be thankful enough that I got lost," he remarked in a low tone, when they parted for the night. And when he took her hand for good-by in the morning, he inquired, searching her rosy face rather anxiously:—

"May I come to see you?"

"Yes, but you live so far away you will forget!"

He smiled incredulously.

"May I come soon?"

"Yes; as soon as you like."

And he waved his hat to her gayly, as he drove away.

In the mean time, the thought of Tom Davis, who was to have his answer to-day, had not once entered Lydia's mind.

Her father came to her with a grave and serious face.

"Well, Lyddy," said he, "what about Tom?"

"O father, tell him that I can never marry him, never in the world," she replied, decidedly.

The squire fumbled in his pockets, and looked nervously down at his delapidated boot-toes.

"Lyddy," with solemn hesitation, "is it anything about this new, this city chap, that has caused you to make this decision?" he asked.

"Well, yes, father, it is," said Lydia, growing as red, from throat to temples, as one of the monthly roses, blossoming on the window seat.

Now Mrs. John Foster looks back upon that dreadful night in the old meeting-house as the most fortunate happening of her life, and Mr. John Foster is sure that he found the only prize worth having, by the means of getting lost just at the right time.

EXPLORATIONS ON THE AMAZON.

I WAS second mate of the British steamer Forward during her two years of exploration in the mouths of the Amazon, and no other field could have been selected to furnish more daily adventures. We had with us a botanist, photographer, a naturalist, an artist, and two outside civil engineers who wanted the experience, and our mission was to make a thorough exploration. This meant to enter every channel where a steamer could float to take soundings; to observe the tides, currents, flood, etc.; to record the washing away of the banks, changes of channels, and a hundred other things the knowledge of which might be useful to the world.

The Forward was a propeller, carried two six-pound cannon as her armament, and when loaded drew only five feet of water. We had a crew of fourteen men, were outfitted with everything which could be possibly used, and were convoyed from Georgetown, in British Guiana, by a man-of-war and a brig, the latter loaded with supplies for us and under orders to anchor where our captain directed, and remain as a store-ship and a haven for us in case of disaster.

I do not suppose there is a geography or a marine chart in existence which gives the actual number of mouths of the Amazon. Any attempt to name them would be guesswork. In the flood season the great river empties its muddy waters over a coast seventy miles long and through twice as many channels, and in the dry season one is unable to find more than five or six channels. Islands are formed one month to be washed away the next. Where there is a bluff ten feet high to-day there will be nothing in sight but water to-morrow. The world could not raise enough cash and laborers to straighten the stream and confine its outlet to one channel.

From what I have read of Equatorial Africa I should call it a paradise compared to what used to be termed "The Spot of Desolation." The line of the equator crosses the mouth of the Amazon, and as for heat, no white man could long endure it. I saw the thermometer marked 122 to 127 degrees for days at a time, and that was on the water, with more or less breeze stirring. The variety of insects which annoyed us at night by biting was something over a score. At times when we lay at anchor off a jungle, a puff of wind would bring such a cloud of mosquitoes that their bodies would cover everything. A white man exposed to them on shore could not have lived an hour. There are seven kinds of poisonous snakes along the Amazon, the largest crocodiles in the world, five or six species of beasts which will attack man, and goodness knows how many kinds of bugs and ants and worms which make life miserable. The things we had most to dread, however, were the jaguar, the serpents, the natives, and the crocodile. They seemed leagued against us from the very start.

We had a steam launch and two yawls for exploration where the steamer would not go, and there were six of us out in the launch one day, making soundings in a great bend, when a monster crocodile rose to the surface close beside us, lunged forward, and had his head and one leg over the gunwale before any one

saw him. The engineer had a hatchet within reach, and with this he gave the reptile such a blow as made him draw off and sink out of sight. The launch had scarcely righted herself, however, when a full dozen more of the saurians rose to the attack. We should have been capsized and every man devoured alive had we been in one of the yawls. As it was, we drove ahead at full speed and outran them, though some of them pursued us for half a mile, and we were nearly swamped with the water splashed into the boat. A few days later, one afternoon as the steamer came to anchor in a channel, the anchor must have dropped among a bed of sleeping crocodiles. They rose all about us, hissing and splashing, and this excitement brought up others, until sixty-six enormous big fellows were to be counted at one time. They attacked the steamer with the utmost fury, and, while their efforts were harmless, their struggles rocked her as if she were at sea in a gale. A fuse shell was prepared in a keg, together with three pounds of lose powder, and at a proper time the keg was thrown overboard. It had drifted a hundred feet astern before they saw it and made a rush. They had pulled it about five feet under water when the explosion came, and a full dozen of the saurians must have been killed by it. It was nearly a month after that before another one came about the steamer, and it looked to us as if couriers had been sent up and down with the news that we were an enemy to be avoided.

On another occasion one of these monsters did us a good turn. I had charge of one of the yawls, which was sounding a channel. The men at the oars were pulling slowly against the current, while the one handling the lead was casting and calling out, when zip! came a dart from a blowgun, passing just over our heads. We knew what it was from the sound it made, but we could not tell from whence it came. Either shore was too far off for a dart to reach us. Over our starboard bow as we pulled ahead was a long thin tongue reaching out from the right hand shore and ending in a pile of driftwood. This tongue had been created by drifting trees grounding on the bottom and the silt collecting to make a bar. I stood up in the boat and took a long look, but could see nothing. I ought to have been able to detect even a rabbit anywhere on that tongue or drift, as there were no bushes, but nothing whatever was in sight. I was in the act of sitting down, almost satisfied that we had been deceived, when a second arrow whisked so close to my cheek that I thought a bird had darted for my eye.

"A close call, sir, and it was a poisoned dart at that!" said one of the men as I dropped back into my seat.

"The infernal wretch must be in that driftwood, though I can't see him!" added the man with the lead line.

We held the boat stationary and prepared to signal to the steamer, which was a mile below, when all of a sudden a fifteen-foot crocodile landed on the tongue of land and began crawling towards the driftwood. He had just reached this pile when a native, who had been skillfully concealed, rose up with a cry of despair. He had a reed or blowgun in his hand, and he made frantic motions to us to save him. We were consulting what to do when the crocodile made a rush, drove him off the pile, and followed after to catch him in the water. As we saw nothing of the man after that, we felt positive of his horrible fate, though we had no sympathy to waste.

Perhaps no instance of the destructive power of a six-pounder can be recorded to match the one I am about to relate. We were about forty miles above the sea, and had come to anchor about pistol shot from the shore, which was here entirely clear of bushes, when we were suddenly greeted by a flight of arrows and darts from a grove over our port quarter. We knew from the number of missiles that there must be fifty natives bunched there. They had not waited to see who we were or what we wanted, but had sent out a challenge to battle before our anchor was fairly buried in the mud. As our mission was one of peace, we sheltered ourselves and made no reply for some time. This simply emboldened the fellows, who doubtless comprised some war party passing up or down, and they shot so many arrows and darts into the steamer that her port side literally bristled with them. It was at length decided to teach them a lesson, and the captain ordered the six-pounder on that side cast loose and loaded with shell. This was done under cover of a screen provided for the purpose, and when all was ready the gun was aimed at the centre of the grove and fired. One loud, long wail followed the explosion, and then we heard no more of the natives. An hour later, when we landed to secure some wild fruit, we found fourteen

dead and dying natives in the grove—all the work of that one shell, which had exploded in the midst of the crowd. In this case, too, the news seemed to spread with great rapidity, for we were not annoyed again for months.

The jaguar of the Amazon is also called a cougar, a puma, and a panther, and he seems to be one and the same beast, no matter what the name. He is lithe, fierce, and vigilant, and an enemy to be dreaded by even the best-armed men. We often saw pumas on the shores or crouched in trees, and now and then floating past us on drifting logs, and their far-reaching cries were always to be heard at night, if we lay within a mile of a jungle. The only man we had killed in the two years met his fate at the hands of a jaguar and under singular circumstances. We had wooded on the right-hand shore, and then paid out our rope cable, by which we were fast to a tree, to be safe from a cave-in during the night. The anchor watch for the night consisted of only one man, relieved at intervals of four hours.

The man who went on at midnight had been on duty only half an hour when a cave-in took place. A strip of the bank, which was four feet above water when we turned in, dropped into the river, and with it the tree to which we were fast. The tree fell directly over the bows of the boat, but only its top coming aboard, and that without doing any great damage. We heard the man's shouts of alarm, but before any one had turned out it was all over with him. A jaguar had been hidden in the tree-top, and as the tree fell he came aboard with it and at once sprang upon the watchman. He had the man by the throat and was sucking his blood as we turned out and finished him.

We dreaded the snakes more than all the rest, as they were to be met with on the water as well as on the shore. Go where you would you could not run amiss of them, and every species seemed more inclined to fight than run. On one occasion we came to a beautiful stretch of shore, and the naturalist and botanist were landed from my boat. We lay for them at the bank, under the shade of a great tree, and as soon as the boat was secure the men stretched themselves out on the thwarts to sleep. I had brought along a fish line and a double-barreled shot-gun. Not caring to accompany the gentlemen in their walk ashore, I proceeded to cast in my hook and await results. Ten minutes had passed, and we were all very quiet, when I felt a sudden thump, followed by a yell and a struggle. On a limb ten feet over our heads a boa constrictor had been lying. He selected the man lying on the forward thwart for his victim, and made a dart for him. That serpent had never seen a yawl boat before, and he made a very natural mistake. In trying to fling a coil around the sailor he included the thwart in his grip. It was a moment of excitement. You can judge of the power he possessed when I tell you that he almost lifted boat and all clear of the water, and the only reason he didn't pull us up to the limb was because the thwart gave way under the strain and flew up as if sent from a spring-board. The sailor didn't get caught, but he felt the folds of the serpent, heard a hiss in his ear, and rolled overboard into the water. The others leaped ashore, and I was left alone in the stern of the boat with the snake almost above me.

When the serpent discovered that he had a piece of board in his coils instead of a live sailor he let it drop, and began looking about for another victim. The sailors called to me to hurry ashore, but I knew that he would drop on me if I made a movement to do so. I cocked the gun and held it ready to fire, while the men ashore, who could see him better than I could, kept me informed of the serpent's movements. He crawled from branch to branch, seemingly confused, but at length he came back to the former spot and made ready for a dart at me. I got sight of his head as he waved it to and fro, and by a lucky shot blew it to pieces. Most of his body at once fell to the earth, but his tail had such a grip on the limb that four of us could not pull it loose. He measured twenty-three feet long, and evidently had the muscular power to crush the largest ox.

SKETCHES.

BY C. A. DAWSON.

IN the far village by the shining sea,
Where the white sails, snow-gleaming in the light,
Creep up the tidal river to the quay,
And land the glistening captures of the night;
At the shading to a close
Of the brightness of the day,
Have you forgotten, Lady Rose,
Our meeting on the lonely way?

Beyond the dreamy townlet, where the trees
With linked branches, golden shadows spread;
Where sweet wind-flowers bend before the breeze,
And many an arum lifts her hooded head;
Where the early primrose blows,
Long we lingered, loath to part;
Have you forgotten, Lady Rose,
Our earnest converse, heart to heart?

The mossy stonework of the ancient span
That bridged the clear brown waters of the stream,
Where round the stepping-stones the eddies ran,
And slipped away with many a sunny gleam.
Still beside the river grows
Starry-eyed forget-me-not;
Have you forgotten, Lady Rose,
The drooping, faintly colored knot?

In the home-garden, where the ivy crept
Around the ruined coping of the wall,
When in mine own your trembling hand I kept,
And in the silence heard the night-bird's call;
Drear and cold the evening's close,
Sorrow of an adverse fate;
Have you forgotten, Lady Rose,
That parting by the wicket gate?

A BARNEGAT LEGEND.

BY BLANCHE SHAW.

ONE dark, stormy night, in the early part of the present century, three men stood together on Barnegat Beach. They were Job West, Hugh Green, and Stephen Brewer. Job and Hugh were men well past middle life, and their faces were so hardened and seamed by the many gales they had braved that all traces of human feeling were battered out of them. But Stephen was much younger. In fact, he had just crossed the threshold of manhood, and in his face, though bronzed and weather-beaten, could still be seen some glimmer of the soul-light within. They had been watching the beach for several hours, but the storm had increased to such blinding fury that they were about to abandon the patrol.

"Thar ain't no use," said Job West, "a stayin' out in this yer gale, fur if anything did come on, yer couldn't see it, or git to it in this yer sea. Whew!" as an extra strong blast swept by, dashing the sharp rain in his face. "Did you ever see such a dirty night? Blast me, if it hain't blowed out the beacon! That's the first time I ever seed that. Yer couldn't hev fixed her well, Steve."

"But I did!" said Steve. "And it was blazin' like mad five minutes ago. Wasn't it, Hugh?"

"Ay, lad; but that doan't make no differince now. It are gone, sure, and yer best haste to build it ag'in, or some poor devil may lose his way in the dark."

Steve strode off to where the beacon had been burning. He soon reached the spot, and saw to his astonishment that some human power, and not the storm, had put out the fire, for the brands were scattered in all directions.

With a muttered oath of amazement he gathered them up again, and had just struck a light on his flint, when a hand was laid on his arm. He dropped the flint, and turned quickly to face a young girl, who, wrapped in a shawl, stood quivering at his side.

"Nancy!" he cried, "what in God's name fetched yer out this time o' night, in this yer storm?"

"The beacon, Steve," she replied, half gasping. "The beacon! It wouldn't let me sleep! I've been a rollin' and a tossin' in bed for hours. Every time I'd shet my eyes I'd see it a blazin' up, and every time the wind whistled around the house I'd hear

the cries and yells of the dyin' folks it had drawn on. O Steve, if yer love me, fer God's sake doan't yer light it ag'in ter-night!"

The girl buried her face in her hands. Steve stared stupidly at her. Nancy West was his betrothed wife. He had long known that her sympathies were not with the wreckers, but never suspected that she would do anything like this, and he could not comprehend it. Stephen was not essentially a bad man. Had any one suggested to him to murder a man, he would have made him rue the insult; but trained from childhood to consider the wealth that sailed the ocean his lawful prey, he looked upon stranding a ship as a hunter does upon bringing down a deer. If human lives were lost it was only a part of the drama, not his fault.

Nancy lifted up her face to him, and a fair, sweet face it was, with deep blue eyes, and long light hair that had escaped from the shawl and was streaming in the wind.

"Yer won't light it, Steve! I know yer won't!"

Steve's brow clouded.

"It 'pears to me, Nance, you air makin' a terrible fuss over nothing. If this war any new thing thar might be some sense in it; but you've seed it since yer was a baby, and like's not hev helped the old man light it, yourself!"

"I know it, Steve, and God forgive me for it! But don't yer do it ag'in to-night, for something tells me it will bring us black sorrow."

She clasped her hands on his arm, and sobbed.

"Nance, you are clear daft! What will the old man"——

Boom! boom! came rolling over the black water, followed by a flash of light. Stephen sprang to his feet and looked eagerly out into the darkness, while Nancy sank down on her knees in the wet sand.

Boom! boom! again. And by the flash that followed he now saw the masts and rigging of a large ship faintly outlined against the sky. He turned to Nancy.

"Go home, girl. The beacon won't be lit again to-night. There's a ship on the bar, and I must go back to the men. Come, Nancy, git up and go, like a good girl."

He hurried back to where he had left Job and Hugh. They hailed him eagerly.

"Halloo, Steve! did yer see her?" cried Job.

"Yes. She's a full-rigged ship, an' looks as how she's on the outer bar. Hark ye!" And a wild, shrill wail of despair rose above the gale.

"She's inside the bar," said Hugh, "or we never could hear that."

Again the cry rang through the air, followed by another gun; and by this flash they saw a large ship lying broadside to shore, just inside the bar.

"Yes, she are inside," said Job. "She's a beauty. Looks like a Spaniard, I think. There will be rich pickin' for us if the waves don't break her up before morning."

After this no sounds were heard from the ship. The waves had evidently done their worst to the ill-fated souls on her. The guns had aroused the village, and soon a large crowd was collected on the beach, as eager for prey as buzzards on a battle-field. Toward morning the storm abated, and at dawn it ceased. The waves still ran mountain high, but above them showed the dismantled hull of the ship.

In spite of the remonstrance of the crowd, Job and his mates proceeded to get their boat ready to go out to her.

"Yer air crazy men, clean daft," said a white-haired wrecker. "No boat kin live in them rollers."

"We'll try it any how," said Job; "and if we go under we'll hev plenty of company with the poor divils that went last night. Hurry up, mates."

And in a few moments the boat, a strong, light skiff, lay on the sand ready to launch.

"Steady there, Steve," cried Hugh. "The next slack is our chance. Bear a firm hand, man."

"Ay, ay," replied Steve, as he bent over the boat; but at this moment a form parted the crowd and came to his side. It was Nancy. Her face was pale and wan, and her clothes soaked with rain. She had evidently not been home since Stephen left her.

"Steve! Steve!" she whispered. "A word with yer before you go. If yer find a livin' bein' on that ere ship, for ther sake of the mother who bore yer, save it!"

"Heave away, mates! All together, now!" cried Job.

Nancy fell back. The boat shot forward, and the next instant it was lost to sight behind a huge wave. The crowd watched breathlessly. But the men knew their work. The boat rose to sight and then disappeared

again and again, till at last it was beyond the breakers, and its crew was pulling steadily for the wreck. They soon reached it, and climbed to the deck. It was a dismal sight. Sails, ropes, and shattered spars, all tangled together, lay in huge heaps, but not a human form was visible. All had either been swept off by the waves, or had perished by taking to the life-boats, which were gone. The ship had already sunken so deeply into the sand that it lay stationary, and the three men walked around congratulating themselves on their luck. A few minutes on deck satisfied them, and they descended into the cabin. Here a sight of magnificent ruin met them. Furniture and fixtures of the richest kind lay around all torn and broken. Job's eyes sparkled.

"She is a Spaniard. I knowed it. I bet yer there is sacks of gold stored in this yer cabin. Ha, what is that?" as a faint cry, like that of a babe, fell on their ears.

"A young un, by thunder!" said Hugh. "What kin it be?"

Again the cry sounded; and guided by it, they opened a state-room door, and found there, lashed fast to the birth, a woman and babe. Both were alive. The men looked at them in silence, and the woman said in English:—

"Thank God! Help has come at last, and I am saved!"

Then Steve drew his knife and began to cut the cords, but Job caught his hand, saying:—

"Hold on, lad! Not so fast. We ain't quite ready to take that lady up yit. She'll hev to wait till we fix things a bit. Come out inter the cabin a minute."

They returned to the cabin.

"Well," continued Job, "this is a bad go. What's best to be done with 'em?"

"Put 'em whar they can't tell no tales," said Hugh. "That's the best place for sech like; eh, Steve?"

In Steve's ears rang Nancy's parting words: "If yer find a livin' bein' on that yer ship, fur the sake of the mother who bore yer, save it." And here lay a mother and a helpless babe. A cold feeling closed around his heart, and a lump rose in his throat. He tried to speak, but Job stopped him.

"Yes, that's it, and a plank road is the best to send her by. Yer git it ready, Hugh, while Steve and me cut her loose."

And he and Steve went back to the state-room and cut the woman loose. They lifted her to her feet. She could scarcely stand, but the babe was fresh and bright, and, unawed by the strange faces, it laughed and crowed. The innocent trust struck home to Steve's heart, and once more he tried to speak; but again he was stopped by Job saying:—

"Yer take the young un, Steve, while I help her up. Kin yer walk, now?"

"I'll try," said she, and then clasping her hands, "Oh, sir, God himself has sent you to me. I thought I should die in this dreadful place. If gold can repay you, you shall be rich for this."

Job did not answer her, but seizing her arm, he half led, half carried her to the deck. Here Hugh waited at the foot of a long plank that he had put over the side of the ship so that one end hung over the sea. Job brought the woman to it.

"Do yer think yer kin carry the young un and walk up that ere plank ter git inter the boat?"

"Oh, yes," and clasping her babe to her breast she tottered forward.

"Steve," said Hugh, "give her a lift."

Pale and trembling, Steve grasped her arm and helped her up the fatal plank.

On, on they went! The plank trembled, another step and the balance point was passed. It dripped over the water. A wild shriek rang out, and then the waves closed over mother and babe!

A thrill of horror ran through the three murderers, and they looked at each other with white faces. But it was only for a moment. Then Job West's hardihood came forward, and he burst into a harsh laugh.

"Wall, that was done good and quick. I reckon she won't give us no trouble 'less the dead come back, and I ain't never seed nothin' of that sort yit. And now, mates, let's git ter work."

Hugh echoed Job's laugh, but Steve could not. The grip on his heart grew tighter, and Nancy's words rang louder in his ears. But he followed the pair to the cabin, and they begun their work of pillage.

The ship was indeed a rich prize. Independent of the cargo, which was valuable, the baggage of the ill-fated passengers was stored with riches. In the state-room of the poor woman alone, were jewels of almost priceless worth. These the men divided among themselves, and then proceeded to secure all the gold they could, for

the surf was fast going down, and other boats were leaving the shore, and the ship would soon be the property of the village; but they had gained the lion's share, of both spoil and crime, and were content.

Two years had passed since the night of the wreck. Stephen and Nancy had long been married, and a six-months' babe laughed in its cradle. They were prosperous in worldly things, and their cottage held more creature comforts than any other in the village. But its inmates were not happy. Stephen was sadly changed. He found no happiness in his wife and babe, and was seldom in his home, but spent his time, when not on the water, in the village tavern. There he would stay all the long night, leaving Nancy to watch and wait, with a heart full of the sickening anguish that only a wife can feel, till dawn came, when he would return, with unsteady step and flushed face, to throw himself on the bed, sleep heavily a few hours, and then be off again. Nor was this all her trouble. Her father, too, had lost his old self. He had always been a hard man to his fellows, but to her he was the most tender, affectionate parent. Now this was gone. The scowl never left his face. He avoided her and her babe, and when he did not go to the tavern with Steve, he would take a bag of provisions and spend days in his boat on the bay, but he never went on the ocean.

Poor Nancy's life was very dark, and the weight of her short twenty years had worn deep furrows in her brow. But with a true wife's devotion, she hugged her baby closer, and hoped that brighter days would come. The second anniversary of the wreck was near at hand, when one morning, as Nancy sat at breakfast with Steve and her father, a neighbor rushed in and announced that Hugh Green had just been found hanging in an old hut, cold and dead.

Nancy shrieked and threw up her hands, and the men sat silent with blanched faces. The woman went on:—

"I ain't much tuk back by it, fur yer know Hugh's been kinder half off this long time. Sort o' acted as if he was scared all the time, and was afeared to be alone. Thar they go now, Nancy, takin' him home."

And the two women, drawn by the morbid curiosity of their class, ran out to look after the crowd. As they disappeared, Job spoke.

"She's ketched poor Hugh first. I wonder how long afore she'll git us! Don't she never come fur you, Steve?"

The sweat stood on Steve's forehead.

"Come for me! Great God! she ain't never away from me a minit, nor hasn't been since that cussed day. And now it ain't only me, but she's after the baby! I never look at the cradle that she hain't a standin' by it, with her white arms stretched out, a sayin', 'Come.' That's why I go away so much. I know she won't leave me, and if I take her off, she can't be after the young un. Talk about your brimstone hells! They can't tech our'n! Eh, father?"

Job laughed his hard laugh.

"Tech it! I'd like to git into it a spell, jest to rest! I'll bet old Hugh is a rubbin' his hands now, and a chucklin' over us. But he won't hev the laugh long, for she'll fetch me soon, curse her."

Here Nancy returned, and the men took their hats and left the house. The day passed away, and neither of them returned, and as night closed in the wind began to rise, as for a storm. Nancy brought in a large pile of wood, and after eating her lonely supper, settled herself for the long weary night she knew was before her. She did not go to bed, for the excitement of the day had so unsettled her nerves that she knew sleep was impossible. The baby lay calm and peaceful in his cradle, and she sat down beside him to watch the old Dutch clock, the spoil from a long-ago wreck, tell the hours till daylight. Then she heard, not Steve's familiar step, but the sound of several feet approaching the house. She hastened to open the door, and saw two of the neighbors bearing between them the form of her husband. They had found him lying insensible on the beach, soaked by the rain, having evidently been there all night. They laid him on his bed, and when after several hours he came out of the stupor, it was to rave in delirium. He lay in this condition for ten days, and Nancy watched over him, hearing him say words that froze her blood with horror, and cut the lines still deeper on her brow. Her father returned a few days after Stephen's illness, but his presence so infuriated the sick man that he could not go near him, and Nancy had only such help as the neighbors could give. Of this she accepted but little, for she did not wish strangers to hear Steve's raving. The tenth day Steve seemed better, and when night

closed in he slept calmly, and Nancy sat down by the cradle and also fell asleep. She was very tired and slept soundly, till a blast of cold air in her face aroused her. She started up. The cottage door stood wide open, and the damp night wind was blowing in. Her first thought was Stephen. She looked at the bed. He was gone. Half stupid with fright, she then turned to the cradle. Great God! It was empty! She stood a moment, frozen with horror, and then with the cry of a wounded panther, she rushed out of the cottage. It took but a few minutes to arouse the neighbors for a search. They decided to go to the beach first; and they were right, for they had gone but a short distance when they saw something white lying in the path. It was the baby's blanket. Nancy seized it and hugged it to her heart, and they hurried on. They reached the spot where the boats lay. Steve's was gone; but he had not taken it to the water. A deep furrow in the sand showed that he had dragged it up the beach. This they followed till it was opposite the old hull that still lay on the bar, and there it disappeared in the sea. There was a full moon in the heavens, but the thick clouds so shrouded it that it gave but faint light, and the little group vainly strained their eyes to discover the boat that could not be far off. Suddenly the clouds parted and the moon came out, casting a broad stream of silver over the sea, and in the middle of it, poised on the top of a wave, they saw the boat! A shout went up. Another boat was run to the water, and four strong arms were ready to launch it, when Nancy sprang in, almost crazy with terror.

"Let me go, men," she pleaded. "I won't be in yer way, an' it's my man and baby, yer know!"

She crouched down in the bow, and the next moment they were bounding over the waves. On, on they went! Those four strong arms must surely gain on the two weak ones; but Steve was doing good work. The clouds were scattering, and the moon shone out steadily. But a few lengths now lay between the boats.

"Call to him, Nance," said one of the men. "He hain't seed us yit."

Nancy rose and called:—

"Steve! Steve!"

He heard her and turned his head. He held his oars a moment, and then, with a wild laugh, he bent to them again, and the boat shot up to the side of the wreck. He dropped the oars, and catching the babe from the bottom of the boat, seized the rope ladder that hung over the side of the ship, and began to climb up. A piteous cry from the babe smote their ears.

Nancy flung out her arms and groaned.

"Oh, men, for God's sake, pull hard!" she cried.

But the oars hung motionless in the air, and Nancy's arms stiffened in their outward stretch. There, on the outward side of the wreck, rose from the water the form of a woman; long, dripping robes hung about her, and a mass of dark hair fell over her shoulders. One arm tightly clasped a babe to her breast. The other was stretched out to Stephen. A moment she stood there; then a terrible shriek rang through the air, and the figure, Stephen, and the babe were gone!

And with a despairing echo, Nancy fell to the bottom of the boat.

As soon as the men could shake off their horror they pulled slowly back to the shore. Nancy was lifted tenderly from the boat and restored to life. But the terrible agony had done its work. Her reason was gone, and, although she lived many years after, a ray of light was never seen in her eyes, or a smile on her lips, and she was known through the country far around as "Poor daft Nancy."

Job's fate was unknown. The day after Steve's death, he went out on the bay in his boat, and neither boat nor man were ever seen again.

And thus ends the tale they tell at Barnegat still.

REDPATH.

A ROMANCE OF EARLY FRONTIER LIFE.

BY DR. J. H. ROBINSON.

CHAPTER X.

A SACRIFICE TO THE CORN-SPIRIT.

MIGNON and the black intended to follow the directions of Brion to a letter; but notwithstanding his instructions to keep to the right, Balaam unwittingly took the left side of the hill. They had made half the circuit of the hill before the consequences of their inattention were apparent. A yell recalled Balaam to the outer waking world, rudely, it must be confessed, but effectually. Mignon was the first to realize the misfortune that had befallen them. She perceived around her a circle of dusky men, armed with spears, knives and guns; she had fallen into an ambuscade of Indians. The discovery was one to try the firmest nerves. Balaam, seeing a red hand grasp his horse's bridle, thought it time to bestir himself; with a sweep of his long arm he felled the offender, then disengaging a small axe which was secured at his saddle, and in the use of which he was practiced, he struck down another savage, and prepared for a sturdy defence of his mistress. Enraged at his resistance, they swarmed upon him in overwhelming numbers, with loud vindictive whoops.

For a time the giant strength of the black prevailed, his weapon gleaming around him in rapid circles, scattering his foes; but anon a hatchet hurled by a warrior took effect upon his head. The faithful negro cast a despairing look at Mignon, and lost his seat in the saddle; but when upon the ground he sprang up and shook himself like a lion; then even Mignon believed he might prove unconquerable. He struck a few blows, then sunk upon one knee; yet continuing to resist and defy them in his own peculiar way. Perceiving that his strength was failing, he turned his eyes toward his beloved mistress.

"The red niggers hab fixed me—God bless ye, missy!" he said, and fell forward upon his face. The infuriated savages would have mangled and mutilated his body, but their chief commanded them to desist, adding that cowards might be hacked and cut in pieces, but not brave men who sell their lives dearly. This humane Indian, however, did not waive the established usage of his race, and in a moment held up poor Balaam's scalp. At the sight of this reeking trophy Mignon swooned. When she recovered, she was seated at the foot of a tree, her body supported by the trunk. The natives were grouped together a few paces distant, speaking earnestly in their own dialect, which sounded harsh and horrible to Mignon. There seemed to be a division of opinion among them, which was finally settled, as she judged by the altered tone of their voices. The chief came and looked at her attentively.

"You wear," said he, in English so broken that we shall not attempt to give it verbatim, "the garb of a princess of the Blackfoot nation, but your skin is pale. The Blackfoot and the Crow are enemies; they hate each other—they go to war and take scalps—they put their prisoners to death. Paleface woman, you must die!"

"Do the warriors of the Crow nation wage war upon women?" asked Mignon, striving to rally her courage.

"They destroy their enemies," returned the chief.

"Enemies are those who take the war-path; the women of the paleface nation never go upon the war-path—they love peace and remain at home."

"Then why art thou here?" said the chief, quickly.

"Not to take life, but to save it," Mignon answered.

"Like all your craven race, you shrink from death."

"And why should I not? Am I not young, and does not the young heart cling to existence? Women die well when the Great Spirit calls; but they draw back from violence and blood."

"The Great Spirit calls you now."

"I cannot hear him."

"He calls you through my voice; he bids you get ready."

"The Crows are cowards, or they would not kill women; brave men hold such deeds in horror," rejoined Mignon.

"Pale maiden, it is better to die young than old. If you go to the land of souls now you will remain young and beautiful forever; but if you live till you are old and wrinkled, you will enter that country as such, and continue so."

"Hear me. I have a father who has much gold; he has a trading-house beyond yonder mountains where he keeps the things most valued by redmen; go there with me, and you shall be made rich above all your tribe."

The Indian paused a moment as if meditating upon what he had heard, and Mignon began to hope.

"You shall have guns that never miss their aim, ammunition to last your lifetime, blankets that defy the snows of the coldest winter, and horses that are swifter than the antelope and stronger than the buffalo. With these you can make war upon the Blackfeet, and conquer them."

"Palefaces have artful tongues, and the redman cannot tell when they speak the truth. What you say sounds well, but you might lead us into the strong forts of the whites, where we should be slain by the thunder of the great guns. I have listened to you too long. The corn-spirit requires an offering, and he will not be content save with a young and beautiful maiden such as thou art."

"Will the manner of my death be painful?" Mignon asked.

"White maiden, it will be painful, but not of long duration," said the Crow. "In the land of souls you will forget your sufferings, and rejoice to see the corn growing green and tall to feed our hungry children."

"It is horrible!" exclaimed Mignon.

"It is nought compared to the torture of three days, when three fires are lighted, and all the arts of inflicting pain are exhausted," he replied, his face glowing with savage ferocity at the recollection of the scenes he had witnessed.

With these words he left her and issued orders which she could not understand. Presently she was placed upon her horse, and the party set off toward the mountains. Mignon turned a last lingering look toward the hill where she had expected to find friends and safety. She submitted to her captors with the helpless passivity of despair, her bowed head and drooping form testifying to her despondency.

The Indians did not address her, and the trail to the nearest Crow village was traced silently. Tallbear, the chief, kept near her person, setting an example of taciturnity, which was followed by his warriors. They pressed forward without stopping, though their progress was slow. The gloomiest night that Mignon ever experienced approached, and with it came clouds and a shower of rain, attended with thunder and lightning. Tallbear ordered a halt, watching the heavens with anxious expression.

"The Great Spirit is angry," said Mignon, hoping to turn the elemental strife to her advantage.

"Yes," answered the chief, "he is angry because the sacrifice is delayed."

"Not so; but for the reason that such a fearful rite is contemplated. While rebuking your wickedness with the thunder and lightning, he at the same time gives you rain to refresh your corn, and prove to you that he can make it grow without your aid."

At that instant there was a terrific explosion, and the red, quivering lightning played around them. The ground trembled with the violence of the concussion. A large tree was shivered from its topmost branches to the roots, while an Indian who had been standing beneath it was stricken lifeless. Tallbear was awed. Ignorant of nature and her laws, thunder and lightning to him had supernatural origin, and indicated the displeasure of the Master of Life.

"Behold," cried Mignon, "the avenging arm of God! He has turned his hand against you; he has smitten one of your braves. He is just, he does well; to him I commend my soul. Redman, hear his awful voice and tremble! His mighty car is rolling through the skies, and the heavens quake. He is over our heads—he is seeing us—his fires are burning in the air with dreadful vehemence."

While Mignon was speaking, lambent flames darting from above played around her pale cheeks. Tallbear recoiled, contemplating her with pallid visage and parted lips.

"Paleface woman, thou art a great medicine!" he exclaimed.

"I am," she resumed, with more impressive emphasis, "but a perishable creature like thee, but I have skill in interpreting the will of the Great Spirit. I know what he desires of his children; and there is that

within that tells me when his power will go forth in fearful fury to rebuke bloodthirsty warriors, and lay low arrogant chieftains. Tallbear, listen!—the Master of Life threatens! Hear his stern menace in the affrighted heavens!"

The maiden paused, and peal on peal shook the mountains, while electrical flashes blazed blendingly around their summits, streaming down into the valley below in red-hot chains.

"It is thus," continued Mignon, with solemnity, "that the God of the white man and the red manifests his indignation and his might!"

The braves threw themselves prostrate upon the earth, covering their eyes with their hands. Tallbear only remained standing; he bowed his head upon his breast submissively.

"White woman, if the Master of Life is angry, what shall Tallbear do to turn aside his displeasure?" he asked.

"I will ask him," said Mignon, closing her eyes and crossing her arms upon her breast; she remained silent a few moments, then addressing the chief, "The answer is (looking steadily at Tallbear), offer no more bloody sacrifices to the corn spirit, for their is but one God that presides over all things, and he is the Master of Life."

"Inquire yet again, and ask him what I shall do with the paleface woman."

Mignon perceived that all depended on the skillfulness of her reply; she had reached the most delicate and critical point of her purpose. She closed her eyes and crossed her arms again, to gain time to form a fitting answer.

"Find a woman among your people who has lost a daughter, and let her adopt this child of the paleface," she said.

The reply was judicious, for the suspicions of Tallbear might have been aroused, had she demanded her liberty at once.

"I will send for our medicine men, and they shall fast three days and see if the Great Spirit will confirm this," returned the Indian.

"The Master of Life speaks but once to man; he never repeats!" exclaimed Mignon, with a dignity and earnestness that were wondrous to Tallbear.

"That is well; he never repeats," he said, then looking searchingly at the captive, added, "And he never denies!"

"And he never denies," repeated Mignon, in the same tone. "But it becomes the awful Deity to remain silent when he has once declared his sovereign will to man."

"Speak again to the Great Spirit, and ask if the prisoner will attempt to escape."

Mignon saw at once the subtlety of this proposition.

"I have done," she said; "his presence is departing—his chariot wheels are rolling over the mountains. Be content and humble. Speak to me no more—I am dumb." Mignon turned her back to Tallbear, and assumed her former silent and hopeless attitude. Tallbear walked away and seated himself apart from his braves, apparently in a thoughtful mood.

In half an hour the storm passed; the rain ceased falling, the thunder was heard faintly rumbling at a great distance, while the lightning blazed against the far-off sky with diminished brightness.

The party went on again, and in two hours drew in sight of a Crow village, in view of which they halted, it being their custom when they had lost warriors not to enter their village on their return, without an invitation from the friends of the slain. The dogs gave notice of their approach, and in a short time the sleepy natives were astir, making suitable preparations to receive their warriors, who, after considerable delay, were formally invited to enter the town. Mignon, though an object of much curiosity was treated with respect. The tent which the unfortunate Balaam had succeeded in securing when his mistress left Callard's encampment was taken from the horse upon which it had been carefully packed, and set up for her exclusive use by Tallbear, who clearly intended to treat her with distinction until her fate should be decided by the "medicine men."

The latter were called together early in the morning. The chief made them acquainted with his original intention of sacrificing Mignon to placate the corn spirit; with what subsequently occurred during the storm of thunder, and his own determination to refer the matter to those skilled in the ways of the invisible powers.

"Now go," he added, "and have lodges built in some lonely spot, and fast according to your custom, and thus learn the will of the Manito of your people.

Whether it was that the "medicine men" had no relish for fasting three days, or whether they believed they had been already

instructed, we are not able to avow; but they declared that the Master of Life had enlightened their minds in dreams and visions; and after a little time, if left undisturbed, they would make known his wishes. The three medicine men accordingly withdrew to a lodge which every person was forbidden to approach. Presently Mignon heard the sound of an Indian drum and frantic yells proceeding from the lodge, and shuddered to think such wretches were to decide her fate. They continued their orgies some hours—a period of dreadful anxiety to Mignon, who, solitary in her tent, was awaiting the conclusion of the rites.

Mignon's father was a Catholic; but she had been educated in the Protestant religion, in harmony with the views of her deceased mother, and she now sought the consolations of the Christian faith. She petitioned God with that contrite fervor that her condition was so well calculated to awaken, seeking that calm strength and unshrinking fortitude he only can impart.

"Daughter of the paleface, come!" said a voice.

It was Tallbear who spoke; he had come to conduct her to hear the verdict of the medicine men. She found the Indians assembled on a plateau near their village, in close neighborhood to a large field of corn. She followed with modest and melancholy mien, her beauty and grace attracting much attention and remark. The medicine men were in a circle formed by the principal men of the village; next the latter were the braves, while the third and last ring was composed of women and children—a motley, clamorous rabble. When Mignon reached the central circle where the three prophets were awaiting her, Tallbear addressed them:—

"What," he asked, "says the Manito of the Crow nation?"

"That the love of life is strong, and all wish to live to enjoy summer and sunshine."

Mignon heard the rejoinder, and though she had made up her mind for the worst, hope revived a little. "Summer and sunshine!" These words had a meaning they never before possessed. She could not refrain from raising her eyes towards the glorious luminary—the eternal lamp of nature. The refulgent beams gleamed as brightly upon her as in the days of her childhood, before she understood the meaning of the word "death." A gentle breeze from the west blew on her face and toyed with her hair.

"O God!" she exclaimed, "why can I not enjoy this forever? Why hast thou placed the grave before mortals, and called them to a baptism of pain?"

"Go on," said Tallbear.

"And he added, moreover," resumed the spokesman of the medicine men, "that he speaketh in thunder and fire; that he createth all things, and causeth the Indian corn to grow."

"I am saved!" thought Mignon. "God will spare my youth!"

"But lest he might some time forget the corn, he has given it in charge of a powerful spirit, whose duty it is to watch over it night and day. The paleface woman has said that the Master of Life loveth not blood, but it was the God of the white man that told her so."

"There is but one God!" said Mignon, who saw her last hope passing away.

"The redman does not serve the God of the paleface," returned the prophet. "Every nation has its deity and no two are alike. We follow the voice of the Great Spirit, and no other will we hear. Behold what he has given us! Look at the boundless hunting grounds, the mighty plains, the shaded valleys, the green forests, which he has kindly bestowed upon us. White woman, the Indian did not make himself, but one greater than he made him with all his instincts. Can his nature change? Can he be other than he is? Who faults him will fault the great and eternal Master of Life. See me—regard me—study me! I am what I am, not because I had any voice in it, but because a will stronger than mine, existing before I had consciouness, willed it so. My face is red—my nature is not soft and weak like yours; it does not love cities and the arts of your people, it has joy in the hunt and on the warpath. And why? Because it was so decreed. I am an Indian, and I thank the Great Spirit that I am! Thus you see the power that created me reconciles me to be what I am, therefore he is wise. It is so with you. You will act true to your nature, and I shall to mine. The manners and customs of nations differ. Our ways seem barbarous to you, and yours are contemptible to us. Pale girl, the corn-spirit is thirsty—we will give him drink."

"Last night the Great Spirit sent rain," said Mignon.

"He drinks not water," said the prophet.

"Oh, it is vain to struggle against fate!" exclaimed Mignon.

"Vain indeed!" added the Indian, in a deep, sepulchral voice. "Could those towering mountains have resisted the will that placed them there for a barrier between us and the sea? Could the snow have helped falling upon their summits? Could you have struggled against his hand when he took up the dust to form you? Know, oh, fair daughter of a hated race! that all things are ordered, and not anything can change. It being destined that you shall die, how can mortal power make you live? Cease to struggle, and meet calmly a fate that you cannot resist; this is the lesson taught by everything in nature. Because you are a woman, and your flesh is tender and shrinks from pain, the Master of Life sends you an easy death."

The prophet made a sign to Tallbear, who approached with a small cord composed of the inner bark of a tree. For an instant Mignon experienced a fearful shrinking and sickening agony of spirit; but conquering measurably her weakness, she looked at the chief, and demanded, in a voice quite free from agitation:—

"What is the manner of my death?"

"It is quick and easy; an arrow will pierce your bosom, and you will be in the spirit land of your fathers before one of yonder clouds can pass over the sun's face," he replied.

"It is well; I am ready, but do not mutilate my person—bury my body on one of yonder high cliffs where the same sun that shines upon the wigwam of my father may shine upon my ashes," said Mignon, submissively.

Tallbear came near to bind her hands.

"Take away the cord; since there is to be no torture, no protracted agony, to bind me were useless. Tell me where to stand, and I will present my breast to your marksman."

"Pale girl, you have courage," said Tallbear, in a low tone. "I would save you if I could, for your voice has a wondrous melody in it, and your beauty is like that of the spirit maidens in the far land of souls. Maiden, the arrow that enters your bosom will give pain to the heart of Tallbear. But the Great Spirit is wise. It is better that you should be taken from my sight." Then, in a louder voice, "Daughter of the Long-knives, we will not send you unprovided to the land of shadows; your horses shall go with you, and your beautiful lodge, that you may have a horse to ride and a lodge to dwell in."

Tallbear waved his hand, and the circling horde of warriors, women and children opened before him.

"Look!" said he, pointing through the narrow lane thus made, "yonder are your horses, and your lodge has been taken down and packed upon them. When you reach the country of spirits, you will not have long to wait for your horses; you will find everything as it was in this world, and the black man with the strong arms will be there to attend you; he is waiting you now; when he sees your large horse, he will hasten to prepare him for your use, and he will hang your little rifle at the saddle, if you should want to hunt the deer."

Mignon saw the animals at a short distance prepared as for a journey. The one she usually rode, seeing his mistress, erected his ears and neighed—a proof of affection which called tears to her eyes. With a parting glance at the noble creature that had borne her uncomplainingly so many miles, she submitted herself to the commands of Tallbear.

"Place me quickly, and let it soon be over," she said.

The chief led her to the centre of the circle.

"This is the spot, here is the bandage to cover your eyes. Your heart is not big enough to see the bow bent and the arrow pointed; you will shrink and run away, or swoon away with terror."

"I will do neither; since it is my duty to die, I will die as becomes the daughter of the great paleface nation."

There was a murmur of approbation.

"It is good," said Tallbear. Then, in a whisper, "Never had the corn-spirit a more beautiful offering. Your eyes are like those of the deer when the hunter's knife is at his throat, hanging over its small neck. Pale girl, you have power over Tallbear!"

The Indian gazed a moment at Mignon with softened expression—his strong hand trembled while placing her in the attitude deemed fitting—and more than once he hesitated and looked at the horses; some half-formed purpose appeared to agitate him.

"Maiden, be firm—the way to the land of souls is toward the west, and your swift horses will fly like birds along the path."

With a heavy breath much like a sigh of regret, the chief left Mignon, who stood with her face toward this open space in the circle. The ribbon or scarf of high colored stuff which covered the upper portion of her person, was suffered to fall a little upon the left side, while over the breast she placed the gift of Ravenclaw—a raven wrought in beads.

"Let your bowman aim at this; my heart is beneath it," she said, with a calmness that surprised the grim warriors, and raised another hum of admiration.

A sinewy Indian walked through the living avenue and appeared at the margin of the second circle. He carried a long bow in his right hand, which, when held vertically beside him, with one end resting upon the ground, reached higher than his head. His quiver, slung over his bare and brawny shoulder, contained but a single arrow pointed with bone. He came with a lithe and dignified step, and stopping at the proper spot, stood erect before Mignon a few yards distant. She heard his coming, and there was a quickened motion of the snowy globe which was to be his mark. He glanced inquiringly at Tallbear. The latter saw him not; with folded arms, compressed lips, and heaving chest, he was looking at Mignon. The red archer remained motionless; suddenly Tallbear turned towards him; his face was flushed, there were beads of perspiration on his forehead, he made a hasty gesture to the Indian who was waiting his orders; he took the arrow from the quiver and fitted it to the string. Mignon stirred not, trembled not, though conscious of the movement.

The archer now paused with the shaft leveled at the figure of the raven upon Mignon's breast; he waited another signal, when he would bend the tough fibres of the sturdy wood, and launch the arrow like lightning at the fairest mark man ever aimed at. Tallbear was in the act of giving that signal, and the Indian was about to let fly his fatal shaft, when a bright object gleamed momentarily in the air, and he fell forward upon his face. Immediately before a warrior had moved, a grim and terrible figure bounded into the circle; his skull was bare to the bone, his face black and streaked with blood; a savage fury and determination marked his motions. He caught Mignon in his arms, and with such a look as the lion casts upon those who kill her young, bore her from the ring. No one spoke; not a hand grasped a knife, gun or tomahawk—all tongues were mute, every warrior paralyzed. Mignon was lifted to the back of her favorite horse; the reins were given her, she grasped them, she felt herself in rapid flight—and one, who seemed to her bewildered fancy like Balaam, was at her side.

CHAPTER XI.

NEW ADVENTURES IN THE CANON.

BALAAM, it will be remembered, was stunned by a hatchet hurled effectively at his head by a warrior; losing his seat, he finally sunk exhausted beneath repeated wounds. He remained insensible a long time. The first premonition of returning life was a consciousness of pain. He became sensible at last of some kind of an existence without the ability to connect the past with the present, or to know where the thread of outer life had been broken. His head glowing with a fiery heat, his eyes drowned in the abyss of darkness, his stiffened tongue, his throat hot and dry, a dull, weary motion of the heart made him conscious of misery only, without awakening individual identity.

But Balaam's vital powers were strong and able to resist much suffering; they prevailed at length over wounds and bruises, restored sight to his swimming vision, and activity to his brain. He raised his head from the ground, the red beams of the sun, then at its meridian, glowing into his face, extinguished for an instant his newly restored sight.

Presently he rose to his feet, he saw one of Mignon's gloves lying near him, and it quickened at once the sluggish current of memory. The thought of Mignon in danger absorbed him wholly, to the utter exclusion of himself, his wounds, his wretched condition. He quenched his burning thirst at the nearest stream, and then took the trail of the savages with the eagerness of a hound that scents his prey. His iron frame disdained its wounds, and his resolute soul, with the undying faithfulness of a dog, scorned physical pain and the gnawings of hunger. Fortunately for him most of his hurts were not of a very dangerous character, the blow upon his head, with the loss of his scalp, being the most serious; though his arms and body were much hacked and scarred by knives and other weapons.

Defying all obstacles, Balaam tracked the

red robbers who had wrested away his precious charge, determined to save her or share her fate. In what manner he was to deliver her he did not know or even ask himself, so entirely were his still disordered faculties occupied in the idea of pursuit. He reached the Indian town at the moment when Mignon's fate seemed decided. He was going to throw himself upon the Indian with the bow and crush him with his giant strength, when a gleaming shaft passed him like lightning, and the tawny archer fell, stricken through the brain with a steel-headed arrow. We have related what then occurred. The Indians, after the rescue of Mignon, took up the dead body of the warrior and retired in silence to their village. It was to them evident that the Great Spirit was not pleased with what they had proposed.

Mignon and Balaam had not proceeded far before they discovered a party of men advancing, that proved to be Captain Brion, Buckeye, and a select number of hardy mountaineers. This sudden meeting, together with the singular plight of the black, excited both inquiry and surprise; and the latter gave place to gratitude when the startling experiences of Mignon and the negro had been properly set forth. No one, however, not excepting Balaam, was more thankful than the partisan for the wonderful escape of Mignon. The revulsion of feeling was so great with her, when she fully realized that she was snatched from death and was safe with friends, that she lost her consciousness. Brion, being the first to observe that she was fainting, caught her in his arms, thus timely preventing a fall from her horse. Balaam, too, now that the excitement was over, felt the need of attention, and the poor fellow was immediately attended to—his wounds dressed, his bravery praised, his fidelity lauded. The purifying and cooling effects of water, and the comforting nature of brandy, were speedily tested, in his case with the most happy effects. Hearty food was not allowed him, but he was permitted to swallow a portion of a biscuit with his arguardiente, when his vivacity being measurably restored, he was able to utter several pleasantries at the expense of his scalpless cranium. The necessary sanatory operations having been attended to, the mountaineers resumed their way toward the canon in which the band encamped the previous day. The partisan placed himself near Mignon, occasionally asking questions concerning her capture, referring to his own anxiety, and detailing the efforts he had made to find her. The account of her rescue was to him interesting. There was something perfectly inapprehensible in that transaction. The idea of the mysterious Redpath was again evoked; how could it be otherwise? Had not the evidences of his presence been indubitable? Unquestionably, yes. There had been a death from an arrow in a manner that he had himself witnessed.

"Mademoiselle Bellmar," he said, "it would appear that you owe your escape to the interposition of that ever present creature, Redpath?"

"My mind has been in such a world of confusion since my unexpected escape, that I have not yet reflected calmly; but that I am indebted to Redpath, seems an inevitable conclusion—a conviction that forces itself upon me spontaneously, without the trouble of reasoning," she replied.

"It would interest me to know what your ideas may be concerning this singular personage, who has a marvelous power of ubiquity, certainly," Brion added.

Mignon paused to rally her thoughts.

"Hitherto," she answered, "my conceptions of him have been quite untinged with romance, and practical to the last degree. I pictured him, brave Brion, a wily savage gifted with a power of cunning remarkable, even for his race, and actuated by the strongest feelings of vindictiveness. Fired with undying enmity, strengthened with unnatural hate, endowed with dauntless courage, and aided by that fox-like cunning, he has been able to cover his movements with mystery, and make his name a word of terror."

"Those were your former views; now your present opinion, if you please?"

"My thoughts at this moment are so unlike what they were, that I shall doubtless excite a smile upon your lips, Captain Brion. Redpath is more like the eagle than the raven."

Brion's eyes rested upon the figure of the raven upon Mignon's breast at that moment, and he said with a smile:—

"But you give the preference to the raven, it would seem?"

Mignon's cheeks assumed a deeper red.

"Yes, I wear the raven, but I shall attempt to impose on my imagination and

think it an eagle," she replied. "Redpath, as I said, is more like the eagle than the raven. He has eyes that are bold and piercing, that dare the sun to dazzle them. He has a front like the god of war. His features are noble, his manners lofty and proud. Redpath is tall and stately as the cedars of Lebanon. With other men he is like Saul among the prophets. His tread is firm and fearless. He speaks but little, and his words are commands. He reads the destiny of the redman; he sees the coming supremacy of the white and the destiny of the Indian. He knows that the way of his people is over the mountains and towards the sea—and towards oblivion. The thought of the extinction of a great nation like his through the injustice of the pale-faces, maddens him; his noble soul swells with emotions inexpressible, and he invokes the vengeance of the great and awful Master of Life."

While Mignon was thus describing Redpath she stopped near a swamp of musquite, and Brion dismounted to adjust her saddle-girth.

"Did you hear a sound?" he asked, turning toward the musquite.

Mignon was already looking in that direction; she replied with some embarrassment: "A slight disturbance among the leaves, occasioned, I imagine, by yonder prairie dog, which our voices frightened from his shelter." But Mignon, in this instance, was not quite ingenuous; she had seen, while Brion was employed with the girth, and at the instant she was finishing her description, the tall form of Ravenclaw. He stood in the musquite in an attentive attitude, as if listening to the tones of her voice. He cast upon her a look of mingled melancholy and pride, and she saw him no more.

"Ah," quoth Brion, rather dryly, "you make a hero of Redpath."

"But what can you expect, my friend, from a giddy girl who owes her life to this same personage?"

"Oh," thought the partisan, "it should have been I who saved this charming woman!"

"You have painted him with the colors of the novelist; but I will not cavil, inasmuch as he deserves unmeasured commendation for what he has done. Redpath in this has done me a good service, also," Brion answered.

"In what manner has he been of service to you, Captain Brion?"

"Had you suffered the fate intended for you, I should never cease to reproach myself," said the mountaineer.

"And why?"

"For the simple reason that I did not care for you better after you put yourself under my protection; it was in me, criminal neglect, for which I most earnestly ask your pardon?"

"I cannot absolve you from a sin which you never incurred. Please to remember that I refused your escort to the camp; therefore if blame there be, it necessarily falls on me."

"I see well where my error was, and even your ingenuous kindness cannot make me forget it. From this hour it shall be my especial prerogative to attend to your safety; it shall be the first, the greatest, the last of my duties so long as you think proper to honor me with your presence and confidence."

"Thanks—thanks! You will well discharge the self-imposed duty; but let me entreat you not to neglect more important matters for the sake of a truant maiden, whose erratic wanderings expose her to the charge of female quixotism."

"Chastisement to him who has the presumption to make that or any other charge of a reproachful character!" exclaimed Brion, with a menacing motion of the hand. "He that couples your name with aught that is unbecoming, shall feel the anger of Ben Brion!"

"And that," said Buckeye, who had now joined the parties, "is no slight thing, accordin' to my views of human nature."

"I trust my humble name will not give rise to aught unpleasant," said Mignon.

"Your name, miss," quoth Buckeye, "shall be the watchword of the camp. By the beard of Joe Smith! them as hasn't no partic'lar religion 'mong us, shall pray to you!"

"I fear I shall prove a poor, dumb divinity," returned Mignon, laughing.

"I sha'n't put up my petitions to nobody else!" rejoined Buckeye. "When I feel like worshipin', I want somethin' I can see."

"You are a materialist," said Brion.

"I should be a good christian, I reckon, if I allers had somethin' lovely in the woman line about me; it softens the rough side of my natur—the nor'west, mountainous side which has allers been uncultivated and neglected."

"Will you be good enough, Buckeye, to repeat me one of the prayers you intend to make use of?" requested the mountaineer.

"Well, cap'n, it would be oncommon like the one I heard you saying in your sleep, not long ago."

"You are talking at random!" protested Brion, palpably disconcerted.

"There's two things I never do—I mean talk at random or shoot at random. But as to the prayer, it should commence somewhat in this fashion: 'O, Mignon, a rude old sinner entreats you never to leave him, that there may be somethin' lovely and good allers near to apologize for the rest of human natur.'"

"Not so bad," said Brion.

"Come, sir, desist!" interposed the divinity of this prayer. Then to Buckeye: "I trust that you mean me well, and intend no disrespect."

"If I mean you otherwise than well, may I be scalped!" cried Buckeye, bluntly.

"I can vouch for his goodness of heart, Miss Bellmar. He has given himself not a moment's rest since your disappearance, and looked for the trail of your captors as earnestly as if you had been his own child."

"There's a heap of malice in ye, cap'n! I ain't old enough to be the girl's father, no ways, and the inooendo isn't altogether friendly," replied the trapper, gravely.

"Oh, I am sure you are not old!" added Mignon.

"Sartinly not. Here's Flash; I'll leave it to Flash; and Flash has known me longer'n any of ye. Come, Flash, what do you say?"

"It's well for you he can't speak," said the partisan, good-humoredly. "A strange tale he'd be telling!"

"Do you hear him, miss? He's afraid I shall become a favorite with you, as I shall, if I live long enough."

"I have you in much favor, now," replied Miss Bellmar, playfully.

In pleasant conversation the parties beguiled the tedium of the returning trail. By the middle of the afternoon they were within a few miles of the canoe.

Life seemed more precious to Mignon than at any previous period of her existence. The sun, the skies, the earth presented new attractions and beauties hitherto unappreciated. She marveled that she had ever beheld them with feelings of indifference. "Glorious world!" she mentally exclaimed, "I shall not leave thee. I shall dwell with and in thee, and experience for many years, perchance, the munificence of provident nature."

Hearing words of salutation from Buckeye, she looked up and perceived that two persons on horseback had joined the party.

"Ah," said Brion, who kept his place at her side, "here is an addition to our numbers."

"And you will do well to be on your guard. One of those approaching is the instrument of Mariot—a half-breed, whose name is Gardette, generally known, I believe, by his Indian name of Beavertaker; while the other is no less a personage than Captain Callard, the partisan of a band of trappers," said Mignon.

"I know them, mademoiselle. That providence which reaches to the wilderness, and beyond those mighty mountains even, has made me acquainted with those now advancing," returned the mountaineer.

"Whatever may be the nature and design of their visit, I trust you will remember, captain, that I am under your protection," Mignon added, with considerable agitation of manner.

"I certainly will not forget a circumstance affording me so much pleasure."

"I need not admonish you to be firm."

"In your cause such admonition is unnecessary. But here they are."

"Captain Brion, I believe?" said Callard, addressing the mountaineer.

"I am thus called," said the latter.

"I think we met many years ago," resumed the former, "but this precarious life of ours changes the human face, you know?"

"The extremes of heat and cold, hunger and thirst, and hardship, all set their mark upon the features," Brion answered. During the time this rejoinder occupied, Callard was looking furtively at Mignon.

"But," added Brion, "though exposure and suffering may roughen the features, I trust it will never change the heart of an honest trapper."

"No, assuredly; at least I hope not, in your case," returned Callard.

"I believe I have a clear conscience. I have tried to make it my study to act the man of honor. Now will you be kind enough to inform me to what lucky chance I owe the honor of this visit?"

Disconcerted by the suddenness of this request, Callard exhibited much embarrassment.

"That I have to say, Captain Brion, is probably more proper for your private ear," he rejoined.

"If there is aught in your message to make a lady blush, I do not wish to hear it. The lady that you see near me may safely be made the repository of the most important secret that can be trusted to human keeping."

"But if the subject to be discussed concerns this young lady herself, you perceive that it may alter the case?"

"Not at all! speak what you have been commissioned to at once and in her hearing. If it concerns her, why then she is the party most interested, and has a right to be present."

"I will throw aside disguise at once," said Callard. "This lady is Mademoiselle Bellmar, who left the roof of her aged father in the garb of a youthful adventurer, and joined company with me at Fort Leavenworth. The fact of her sex having transpired, she clandestinely left my encampment."

"Had she not a right to do so?"

"Under ordinary circumstances she had an undoubted right to govern her own movements; but this, you will readily apprehend, was a peculiar case. It was my duty as well as my design to send her back to her father under a safe escort. It was an unwillingness to return that unquestionably induced her to withdraw from my protection."

"You cannot imagine that Miss Bellmar has not a will or purpose of her own?"

"Certainly; she has too much will, and as to her purpose, I will not wound her delicacy by referring to it."

"Nor need you; I know it already."

"That she entered on this wild enterprise to be near her lover, may be admitted without compromising her womanly instincts; but there is no accounting for that caprice that induced her to fly from him, when to all human appearance it was quite unneedful."

"With delicate questions of this nature, it ill becomes you or me to meddle. She will herself regulate her speech and conduct in regard to such matters."

"Allow the chivalrous captain to proceed; he has learned well his lesson," said Mignon.

"I insist that there was nothing unmaidenly in her conduct when it is considered that she has from her infancy been engaged to Monsieur Mariot, and her marriage was arranged to take place immediately after his return from the present expedition."

"You are not only ingenious but ingenuous!" exclaimed Mignon, while the blood mounted indignantly to her cheeks. "What you intimate is both base and false. Pierre Mariot is the most contemptible of men!"

"He is your father's partner, mademoiselle!"

"To his regret and mine."

"I will not cavil, but come to the point. My present purpose is to conduct the daughter of my employer back to my camp."

"She will act her pleasure," added Brion.

"I shall remain where I am. And I commission you to assure Pierre Mariot of my unmeasured scorn," said Mignon.

"In case of your refusal, I am charged to act against your wishes—for your own good."

"That means to capture my person, and take me to Pierre Mariot by brute strength?"

"It implies some degree of force, of course, Miss Bellmar, which rudeness I hope you will attribute solely to zeal for your happiness. This sudden aversion, believe me, will soon give place to your former feelings. Do me the honor to accompany me."

"Captain Brion," said Mignon, "I have no more to say to this man. To you I commit the guardianship of my person."

"The captain has too much sense, young lady, to meddle with an affair that does not concern him, but rather tends to disconcert his plans for the commencing campaign," Callard answered, with increasing confidence.

"Ah, we shall see," quoth Brion.

"Beavertaker—this way," said Callard, calling to the half-breed, who was in the rear a few paces. "Take the lady's horse by the bridle."

"Back, you scoundrel!" cried Brion. "Captain Callard, begone! I cannot longer keep down my indignation! Your insolence is past all patience!"

"You have heard my instructions, Captain Brion. She refuses to go—I must take her."

"You will take my life first!" retorted Brion in a resolute tone.

Beavertaker attempted to pass him to reach the side of Mignon, when the excited partisan, rising in his stirrups, unhorsed him in a moment of time.

"By the beard of the prophet Smith! If there's fightin' to be done, I go in for it!" shouted Buckeye, galloping Flash to the spot. "Let me strike this here feller, cap'n!" Before Brion could grant or refuse

the boon asked, the trapper pressed hard against Callard, and gave him a most ungentle push with the muzzle of his rifle.

"Forbear!" cried Brion. "Let there be no quarrel with him."

The captain meantime drew a pistol and Buckeye grasped his wrist to take it from him, when it was accidentally discharged, wounding him (Buckeye) slightly in the arm. The ball passed so near Mignon that it grazed her neck, but happily did her no harm.

"Captain Callard, a struggle with us will be useless, and can but result in injury to yourself. Go at once, and think no more of the projects of Pierre Mariot," said Brion.

"Go yonder with me, sir, and I will settle this matter with you with the bowie-knife or the rifle," returned Callard, thrusting the empty pistol into the holsters.

"Captain Brion, if you have any regard to my wishes, do not listen to such a brutal proposal!" said Mignon, earnestly.

"I have no cause of quarrel with you, and so decline your offer," said the partisan.

"That is a manly answer," asserted Mignon, encouragingly.

"Had Pierre Mariot given me such a challenge, I would not have refused his satisfaction; but I have no wish to slay a man with whom, until this hour, I never exchanged a dozen words, and who, to my knowledge, never injured me."

"As you will," returned Callard, choking down his anger. "I am only carrying out the wishes of my employer, urged on by the hope of restoring this fair lady to the arms of her father."

"She chooses to return under a safer escort than Mariot's, and this affected zeal is not in keeping with your conduct. As long as Miss Bellmar chooses to remain under my protection, no power on earth shall restrain her inclinations."

"One would be disposed to think that the days of knight-errantry are reviving; but this foolish obstinacy on your part may be productive of serious results. Since you will not listen to reason, I must leave you and rest the termination of the matter with Mariot. I think, captain, you will hear from this affair again, and in a manner at variance with your interest and wishes."

Callard rode away in bad humor, followed by the half-breed.

"That man means to be dangerous," remarked Buckeye.

"If he suffers himself to be led by Mariot, yes," Brion replied.

At that moment a man came to tell the partisan that Balaam was overcome by sleep, fatigue and exhaustion, and was in danger of falling from his horse. The mountaineer instantly ordered a halt, and the black being disposed of in comfortable position, slept heavily till dark. Brion had given orders to go forward again, when a fire was heard in the direction of the canon. Mignon was the first to mark the sound, and looked inquiringly at the captain. The latter was assisting her to the saddle; when she was seated he enjoined silence, and going to a small knoll, turned his practised ear in the direction of the ominous disturbance. There was a heavy volley and then a dropping fire which continued. Brion came back in a few minutes.

"The Indians have attacked our camp," he said. Buckeye and the whole party confirmed his opinion.

"Yes," asserted the former, "the heathen reptiles are at their old tricks again. Many and many a time have I heard that kind of firing when the oncivilized buffalo-eaters were astir. They'll never be content to mind their business as long's there's a hoss to steal, or a white trapper's camp to plunder. I allers go in for a skrimmage when they makes themselves too free in that way. Flash is a runnin' fight, but not quite so handy in a reg'lar bush tussle, where the red niggers skulk from tree to tree."

Balaam approached much refreshed, singing about a venerable relative "who had no wool on the top of his head, in the place where the wool ought to grow."

"That's a game cretur," continued Buckeye. "Nothin' seems to break him down, though one might naturally think that the loss of his night-cap is a solemcholly affair calkillated to check a happy flow of spirits."

"Go on in dat strain, Buffalo-eye," quoth Balaam, with an exhibition of ivory.

"You hear that firin', don't ye, Bill-em? Well, the Ingins have come back arter the rest of your scalp," said Buckeye, banteringly.

"Go 'long, Bullseye! don't spose yer limited edication!" retorted Balaam.

"The firing continues to grow more spirited," said the partisan.

"How are we to reach the camp?" inquired one of the trappers.

"That is yet to be determined, and an

undertaking which may be attended with danger. If our friends are surrounded by Blackfeet, it certainly will not be easy to get to them. It is possible, however, that the attack may be confined to one side, in which case we can join our comrades without much difficulty. The real state of affairs must be learned by one experienced in woodcraft, while the rest remain at a prudent distance until the thing is settled. If practicable, we will go to the camp, if not, we must abide by circumstances."

"That's advised like an old mountaineer, cap'n," said Buckeye. "A better arrangement couldn't be made, considerin' the circumstances. There being a woman with us, that woman must be pertected, cost what it may. If there was none but masculines 'mong us, we might cut our way to camp through a host of yaller Ingins; but as I have said, it isn't so; there's one here that must be defended to the last."

"We will proceed to the timber yonder, which is near the canon, where I will leave you in charge of the men for the protection of Mademoiselle Bellmar, while I reconnoitre the condition of the camp. Judging by the continuous fire, there is a determined conflict going on, with the advantage of numbers on the side of the enemy."

The partisan, having given other premonitory instructions, set forward on foot for the scene of the fight, while his little band of trappers with Mignon took shelter in the timber.

Brion approached the canon by the most obscure way, covered by pinon and cottonwood. He pushed warily on until he was able to command a tolerably good view of the spot; or more properly a position where in broad daylight he could have looked along its entire length; but darkness now hung over the cliffs, relieved by the flashes of the fire-arms only, as the Indians fired down from their hiding-places at the trappers below, and the latter replied by the sharp crack of their rifles. The mountaineer perceived that the attacking party was large, for the sides of the canon were occupied in every accessible place, a blaze leaping from every projecting ledge and rock—every cleft and hole.

Entering the canon, Brion made such a disposition of the trappers as at length repelled the attack of the assailants, after a most obstinate resistance. Having restored comparative quiet, he set out on his return to the timber, where he had left Mignon when he went to reconnoitre the camp. He had passed the most perilous portion of the canon, when an Indian suddenly rose from behind the rock with upraised tomahawk. With sudden presence of mind Brion parried the descending weapon, and dashed his gun against the Indian's head and brought him to the ground. He felt for his hatchet, but a feeling of mercy prompted him to hesitate. He gazed in the grim face of the warrior a moment, and slowly taking his foot from his breast, said gently:—

"Arise! I could have taken your life, but I will not. Depart in peace!" The Indian arose, walked a few paces, and turning, said, "Son of the Yankee, Blackbird will not forget this." Then moving silently along the canon, he said, "Son of the Yankee, adieu."

When Brion had nearly reached the timber, shouts and pistols fell on his ear. Quickening his speed, he soon saw a confused mass of human figures fighting hand to hand, and Mignon surrounded by a circle of trappers defending her with desperate courage against formidable numbers of Indians. With dauntless daring he made his way among them, and forced the enemy to yield wherever he appeared, and they finally left the field. The little party mounted, and galloped towards the canon, which they entered soon after the moon had arisen. But the Indians gathering in the cliffs above the canon, threatened by their numbers to overwhelm them. Brion sought a place of greater security where he might place Mignon, while the other trappers were engaged in repelling a new attack, and the partisan found himself alone with her.

Being thus thrown together, every moment was freighted with interest. The partisan cared not to speak much; he was better content to gaze silently at Mignon, whose features in the soft moonlight reflected a spiritual beauty.

"Has not the firing ceased?" she asked.

"In the canon, yes," said Brion; "but when the moon is higher, it will be resumed again."

"Be patient with me, my friend, but I believe my physical powers are quite exhausted."

"Nor is it singular that such should be the case. You have passed through great trials."

"I think you will have to assist me from

my horse. It appears to me that I am losing my consciousness."

The partisan sprang from his saddle, and taking Mignon in his arms, placed her tenderly upon a grassy knoll.

"My mouth is burning with thirst—do I not hear the running of a stream?" she said, languidly.

The mountaineer took a drinking-cup from the leathern wallet or valise at his saddle, and hastened to look for the rivulet whose bubbling was audible. He came back with water, and Mignon drank.

"Thanks, thanks! How kind is Nature to supply our wants! What so grateful as this pure beverage to the parched lips?" she remarked, returning the cup.

Brion made no answer, but held up his hand warningly. The spot where the parties were resting was a glade near the northern entrance of the canon. On that side next the canon the trees were sparse and of small growth; but the prairie grass was high, and the shrubbery thick.

"Yonder," said Brion, "I see the grass in motion, as if a large body of savages were creeping through it."

"Heaven keep us from their fury!" cried Mignon.

"So let us trust!"

The mountaineer looked around to see if some of his party were not in sight, but not one of them was to be seen. He watched a moment longer the peculiar motion of the grass that had excited his suspicions.

"It is true!" he exclaimed. "These red hounds have scented us again! But," he added, turning to Mignon, "Miss Bellmar, I will sell life itself in your defence!"

"Generous defender! I hope your hour is not yet. Cast your eyes about you, and see if some avenue of escape is not open."

"I think we are surrounded; but one consolation remains to me yet."

"What is it?" inquired Mignon, faintly.

"It is the priviledge of dying with you!"

"Extends your devotion, then, so far?"

"To die for you is my duty."

"No, no, I will not accept the sacrifice. Fly at once! Escape while you may, and leave me to my fate!" said Mignon, partially rising, excitement lending her strength.

The partisan smiled, but scorned to reply to such a proposition. His calm face never looked so handsome as then to Mignon.

"Ah, it is vain to urge such a consideration upon you! You are firm—you will not go; I read it in your eyes, on your lips," added Mignon, in a subdued voice.

"You are right; I would not leave you if a thousand warriors were each thirsting for my blood, and each under a vow to give me a wound."

"And why?"

"Because it is a man's duty to protect woman, at all places, under all conditions."

"Is there no other reason?"

Brion's hitherto placid face was suddenly agitated; but he struggled manfully to regain his composure.

"Do you wish me to be perfectly frank?"

"Does the awful danger that encircles us warrant aught but the most entire candor?"

"Evidently, no; but I will say no more until I have made yet another effort to save you."

The mountaineer raised Mignon from the ground and placed her in the saddle. Mounting his own horse, and entreating her to bear up yet a little longer, he took her bridle rein and moved towards an opening at the western margin of the glade, which seemed to offer the only chance of escape. He and his fair companion had galloped but a few rods before he perceived that the open space led directly to the canon, and the ground was too rough to be traversed by horses.

"We seem to be indeed lost," said Brion. "But let us dismount; I can carry you in my arms."

"Do not burden yourself with me, my friend! Without me you may elude the savages."

"A burden you will not be. Come, let us hasten along the canon. Ah, but they are very near! Do you not hear those yells? It will be a pleasure to defend you, and a pleasure to die with you. Mignon, I love you!"

"Then death will unite us forever!"

"Death to me will be welcome, Mignon, you are dearer to me than life!"

"My friend, I am yours in life or death, as God may order. We will not be separated."

The partisan took Mignon from her horse, and pressing her to her heart, was bounding away, when a dusky figure appeared in his path. Supporting her with his left arm, he grasped a weapon with his right.

"Son of the pale-face, forbear!" said a deep calm voice.

"Resist me, and you die!" cried Brion,

whose pistol was aimed at the tall, motionless form.

"I seek not your life; if I did, no earthly power could save you," rejoined the Indian.

"Speak not so proudly; we are but man to man, and I think at this moment that the advantage is with me."

"Look!" added the Indian, waving his hand and emitting a sibilant sound. Brion cast his eyes around and saw scores of red faces arising about him as if from the earth.

"Lost!" exclaimed the partisan; but Mignon, though conscious, was too much agitated to speak. She had covered her eyes that she might not see the dreaded visages of the savages.

"Son of the white man, you need not look for those whom you left not long ago; they are prisoners," said the Indain.

"I ask nothing for myself; prepare your tortures; but spare this maiden!" exclaimed the mountaineer.

"You do well not to ask mercy of Ravenclaw; you shall both share the same fate. The nature of the redman is cruel!" returned Ravenclaw, with lofty irony.

Mignon unclosed her eyes and fixed them upon Ravenclaw.

"Lilyface, you are free," he said, with dignity.

"And this brave man—is he not free also?"

"He dies!" replied the Indian, coldly.

"So will all men die, brave chief." While Mignon was speaking, she took the figure of the raven from her bosom and fastened it to Brion's breast.

"That saves but one life!" said Ravenclaw.

"Let it be his, then. Son of the eagle, I am your captive."

Ravenclaw remained silent a moment, then turning to the grim circle of braves, he said, authoritatively:—

"Warriors, release your prisoners, and return to your lodges."

He did not speak again until every red face had vanished.

"Lilyface, you and your people shall live. I have saved them; yet the redman is cruel, and his nature is stern like flint!" Then to Brion: "Son of the Buffalo, go your way. The daughter of the timid doe has given you life, and saved your trappers from the knives of the Blackfeet braves. Thank the Great Spirit that he has not called you to-night to go on the trail to the land of souls. Go and take the otter and the beaver, and fulfill your allotted moons on the earth."

With a gesture of indescribable dignity, Ravenclaw walked rapidly from sight, while Brion and Mignon gazed after him in breathless silence—almost in awe.

CHAPTER XII.

MIGNON AN INTERESTED PARTY.

PIERRE MARIOT was possessed of dogged perseverance when in pursuit of a coveted object. Opposition sharpened his eagerness, and difficulties quickened his energies. If his intent were bad, it mattered not; the same obstinate firmness marked his movements. His unexpected repulse by Mignon aroused this perverse principle in his nature, and subsequent events put it in full action. The motives that induced her flight from Westport were to him, at first, profound mysteries—mysteries, too, which he was feverishly anxious to penetrate. Her escape from his camp, and from that severe espionage which he intended to exercise over her, disappointed, while at the same time it provoked him.

That Mignon would put herself under Brion's protection, he was quite sure, and immediately upon the discovery of her flight, conferred with Callard in regard to the best means of again obtaining control of her person, while Beavertaker was sent to watch the movements of the rival band, with instructions to report what he saw as often as practicable. He returned at noon on the ensuing day with the startling intelligence that Mignon had probably been captured by the Crows, and that Captain Brion had started in pursuit with a picked party of trappers. He made the discovery by overhearing a few words while concealed in the bushes near the encampment of the mountaineer, but the particulars were unknown to him. This news perplexed Mariot not a little, but he settled the matter, after some reflection, in this manner: Brion was undeniably both bold and experienced, and would rescue Mignon—if rescue were possible—without his aid or co-operation; hence he need only remain quiet and await the issue. Upon this policy he acted. Through the instrumentality of the half-breed, he was informed on the following day of the young lady's rescue, and that she was being conducted to the canon by the brave partisan. It was then that Callard was sent with the message,

which, as we have seen, was treated as it deserved by Mignon and the captain.

Beavertaker was then instructed to instigate the Blackfeet warriors (whose minds he had influenced by presents and inflammatory speeches), to attack the trappers encamped in the canon, which he did; while Kincaid, in the disguise of an Indian, led another party against Brion for the purpose of withdrawing Mignon from her protection, in accordance with the wishes of his employer, Mariot.

The failure of this scheme to obtain the person of Mignon was a vexatious disappointment, but from which he soon recovered to concoct a new one, in which Headley was to bear some part, influenced by bribes and promises.

"Remain encamped in this vicinity until I have captured this truant damsel, and I will give you such an outfit as you need for the long march before you," said Mariot to Headley.

The intended plan failed, and Mariot now endeavored to work upon Headley, to league with him in his purpose to secure the person of Mignon. He gradually prepared him by an artful detail of such a story as he pleased, and a prolonged conversation followed, in which Mariot developed so much of his plans to his accomplice as he deemed prudent. These plans we will not now detail, as they will be known by subsequent events. In the meantime we will return to Mignon.

Attended by the partisan and the trappers who had been taken and released by the Indians by the orders of Ravenclaw, she soon had the satisfaction of reaching a place where she could obtain that rest she so much needed.

But new and powerful emotions agitated her heart; she prayed, she wept, and then, overpowered by fatigue, sank to sleep, to pass through again many of the scenes of the last forty-eight hours. When she awoke, she saw the sunbeams creeping in through the apertures of the tent, and knew that her slumbers must have been protracted. She felt no disposition to move, and recalled all that had recently transpired, in the proper order to each particular interest. She remembered, too, as a last link in the chain of events, that something had passed between herself and Captain Brion; the recollection heightened the color of her cheeks, and quickened the pulsations of her heart. She asked if her conduct had been such as became her sex and situation? if she had deported herself with dignity, courage and delicacy? She trusted that she could answer yes with a tolerably clear conscience, but feared that maturer thought might bring convictions less flattering.

"Come," said Brion, "as you have not breakfasted, you must test the skillfulness of an old French voyageur's cookery—not so varied, perchance, as the fare to which you have been accustomed, but which I trust you will not find wholly unpalatable."

Mignon followed the partisan to the open air. Beneath the cooling shade of an overhanging cliff, upon a small grass plot, was arranged the simple cookery to which Brion had referred, consisting of tender venison prepared in the best of trapper style, some hard biscuits, and the luxury of coffee—an unpretending meal which they cheerfully discussed.

We have sometimes wished that lovers might remain lovers to the end of their lives, and thus secure the pleasures of a continual affection, tinged with that novelty, freshness and expectation that attended the first awakening of that gentle sentiment.

"By the beard of the Prophet Smith!" exclaimed Buckeye, approaching Brion.

"Well?" said the partisan, inquiringly.

"Who do you suppose is looking for you?"

Brion replied that he could not tell.

"It is your old friend Headley," quoth the trapper, with his accustomed shrug.

"Ah?" said Brion. "What does he want?"

"Beavers and otters! I ain't in his confidence! What's more, I don't want to be. The truth is, I haven't no faith in the cretur. There's a kink in his disposition that I can't straighten out, no way. Depend on it, cap'n, there's sunthin' in the wind!"

"Possibly not; it's our duty to be charitable, you know. There's no man so bad that he has not some good in him."

"When you find the good spots in Headley, I wish you'd jes' clap your fluger on 'em, or make a chalk mark acrost 'em, so they can be diskivered by common eyes. According to my notions of human makin' up, there were a few ingredients left out at the time of his airthly composition; one of them articles was honesty, which on the whole is rather important in creatin' a human bein'."

"Yes, certainly honesty ought to be remembered, friend Buckeye."

"But in this case it was totally disremembered; but here he comes, and you can make more or less of him, jes' as the notion takes you."

The partisan was already watching the approach of Headley, wondering what the object of his visit might be. The mutinous trapper drew near with a downcast look.

"Captain Brion," he said, penitently, "I have no right to expect a friendly reception from one, whom I fear, I have treated very unhandsomely."

"Your conduct, Mr. Headley, has been well calculated to forfeit my good will, and your presence in camp cannot be regarded by me as a very welcome event," returned Brion, coldly.

"I expected such a reply; my behavior has merited severe reproof. I came prepared to hear your reproaches patiently, and to confess that I deserve them," returned Headley, in the same humble tones.

"By the beard of Smith, yes!" said Buckeye in a suppressed voice.

"Before you say more, let me ask why you are here?" resumed Brion, with considerable sternness.

"To acknowledge frankly, captain, that I have been in fault, and to beg to be restored, partially at least, to your confidence."

"To have confidence in a man who has forfeited his word, and forgotten his duties, as you have done, will prove exceedingly difficult, I suspect, to one who, like me, is strong in his prejudices. Where are those who went with you?"

"Some of them have joined another band of trappers, and the remainder are on their way to Fort Laramie."

"And the gold seeking expedition"——

"Is abandoned."

Brion mused a moment.

"Mr. Headley," he added, "if I had any means of testing your sincerity, your apologies should be accepted."

"Try me," said Headley, "and if you find one in your band more quick to obey your orders, then you shall be at liberty to doubt my sincerity. My original agreement, I am aware, is forfeited, and I do not ask to be fully reinstated, but merely to be tolerated among you; more I cannot reasonably expect."

"My nature, sir, is a frank, unsuspecting one. You recollect the old adage—'To err is human,' etc. I am disposed to overlook your fault, and restore you once more to your place, and I trust my confidence will not be abused."

The parties were standing near Mignon's tent, and at that juncture that young lady appeared. Headley, who saw Mignon advancing, exhibited considerable surprise, fixing his eyes so intently upon her, that she could not but be aware of his close scrutiny. Her beauty dazzled the unstable Missourian. He had expected to see a musculine young woman, possessed of no more charms than Don Quixote's Dulcinea; therefore the loveliness of Mignon was a revelation so unexpected, that he could do nothing but stare at the fair apparition, as if quite bewildered. He could now fathom Mariot's motives, so far as this attractive divinity was concerned. He desired to secure her person not so much for humanity's sake, as for his own; for it seemed to Headley impossible that one who had once seen Mignon should not love her.

Days passed on, revealing to Headley the felicity of Brion, and the calm trust of Mignon. He was maddened at the successes of one toward whom he had never felt any friendship, and one, too, that his conscience assured him was much his superior in moral attributes and sterling qualities. He saw them walk together, and the sight was hateful to him; he heard them speaking in low and confidential tones and the sounds were torture to his ears.

The partisan, absorbed in the presence of Mignon, grew daily less observant, till his movements were entirely unwatched by him. It was then that the Missourian began to take walks by himself, which daily grew longer and extended further from the camp. As he returned regularly, and deported himself well, no suspicion was excited so far as Brion was concerned.

One circumstance annoyed the Missourian; he was satisfied that Buckeye had followed him on more than one occasion, which was a species of espionage threatening to prove fatal to his plans. After many attempts he succeeded in eluding, he believed, the vigilance of the trapper. The hour was between sunset and dark. By a circuitous route he reached the arm of timber, near which the steel arrow had been so singularly projected by an unseen bowman, and into the tree upon which the figure of a man had been carved with the point of a knife. A

person advanced from the timber and met him; it was the half-breed. Together they passed into the obscurity of the wood, and conferred earnestly for a long time, when Headley hurried back to the canon. At eleven o'clock, when the partisan walked through the encampment, according to his habit, everything was as usual, and he went to sleep with the consciousness that all was safe.

When he visited Mignon's tent in the morning, she was not there. While wondering at the circumstance, Buckeye came to inform him that several of the horses had been stolen during the night, Mignon's among others.

"Where is Headley?" asked Brion.

"He's not to be found," said Buckeye. "By the beard of Smith!"

Brion lost no time in useless repinings over what had happened. That he was perplexed and anxious will be believed, and needs no affirmation. With characteristic promptness he commenced a search for Mignon. The ground around the tent was thoroughly examined, but it was not of a nature to leave a trail; there was a rocky ridge extending a mile or two from the canon, upon which the foot of man or horse could make no impression. Though sharp-sighted and experienced, the partisan was unable to determine the course of the missing maiden. Under these circumstances, he mounted his horse to make a more general investigation. Buckeye, like a faithful friend, attended the captain, as much interested in the search, apparently, as he.

"I always mistrusted the cretur," quoth the trapper, alluding to Headley, "and you remember, perhaps, that I advised you to have nothin' to do with him, notwithstandin' his penitence like."

"Your suspicions were at first shared by me; but his correct deportment afterward restored my confidence," returned the mountaineer.

"I'm not blamin' ye for bein' charitable, as 'twere, because charity is what we all need more or less. I ought to recollect, too, that your mind was much taken up with that oncommon woman."

The partisan's manly face was suffused for a moment, and he answered:—

"It is possible that I have been selfish in my happiness; and upon reflection, I am inclined to think so."

"No apologies, cap'n; in sich a case it isn't in human nature to be otherwise. She is the puttiest woman alive, and interestin' to match. As old as I am—and I'm a little up'ards of forty—I'm almost fool enough to love her myself."

"What pleasure it gives me to hear you speak so kindly of her!" said Brion, warmly.

"Who could speak otherwise? There's nobody with a heart that knows her, that can say anythin' that isn't to her praise. You'll be a happy man with her; if not, 'twill be your own fault."

"You forget that she may be lost to me forever!"

"That's a supposable case, but I can't make up mind to it yet. She'll turn up somewhere dead or alive, when you ain't expectin' her. I shall travel a great many miles afore I give her up, nor despair in one day or two, or in a week or a month. Flash can carry me like a bird, and won't mind a thousand miles of travel sca'cely at all, 'specially when he knows who he's arter; in fact the quadruped needs exercise rather, to lubricate his j'ints, like."

"Buckeye!" exclaimed the partisan, "your friendship gives me courage, and makes me think better of my fellow-men."

"Beard of Smith! it's like your charitable natur to say that. But that's not to the p'int, exactly. I wonder where Callard and his band may be about this time!"

"On the march, and far ahead of us, doubtless. Ah, if it were not for this unfortunate affair, we might hope to overtake them. Clearly, they will reach the trapping grounds first."

"It can't be helped; you've labored under peculiar diffikilties, and 'tisn't in the power of man to control carcumstances so they'll work jest to one's mind. The best of us are short-sighted mortals, and can't see much beyond our noses. Providence deals with us precisely as it's a mind to, knowin' the end from the beginnin'. Worryin' never did nobody no good, and never will as long as the airth carcumnavergates the air. We must submit to what comes with becomin', submission, knowin' it's from above, or somewheres in that d'rection," rejoined Buckeye.

"I have endeavored to do my best for my employers."

"I'll make oath to it in a court of justice, with my hand on the Bible! It's true that you stopped a few days, but humanity required that you should. Redpath, himself,

couldn't be so much of a savage as to go on and leave an honest fellow-man in sickness and distress, no matter what his complexion might happen to be. No, no! sich barbarity couldn't be found. The wounded and sick must be taken care of—fur or no fur; whether companies get rich or not. Them's my notions, and I'm forty and up'ards."

"My own, too."

"It's equally your duty to look after this Mignon, let what will come of it."

"That is my fixed determination. But tell me, my friend, where shall we look?"

"In sev'ral d'rections; Headley must be found, if it takes a month; and perhaps you'll have to push on after Callard—there's no knowin'. And as for Pierre Mariot, he deserves lynchin!"

"He's a villain!"

"As wicked a scamp as ever walked the prairies, Headley excepted."

"I have a thought which perhaps I ought not to speak, but which, nevertheless, has given me some uneasiness."

"Speak it, cap'n, 'less it's somethin' compromisin' the integrity of that oncommon female; in which case you'd better be silent."

"I recollect that Headley tried to make himself very agreeable to Miss Bellmar."

"Beard of Smith! I'm 'shamed of you, cap'n. I can see what you're drivin' at, and advise you to drop the subject where 'tis. I've never seen the gal that knew her own mind better, though I'm forty and up-'ards."

"I thank you, Buckeye; I certainly do wrong to doubt her."

"Depend on't, wherever she's gone, it's ag'in her will. She isn' one of the flighty kind, taken with every decentish face, and deceived by every artful tongue."

"That is but justice to her good sense. I shall ask her pardon for entertaining a thought, even, not to her credit."

"I'll see that you don't forget it, cap'n. She's equal to any of the saints in the calendar, and you deserve to do penance, as 'twere."

"We must search for the villain Headley, and I shall give myself no rest until I have found his lurking-place; I will cross prairies, I will climb mountains, I will cross valleys and rivers, and dare every peril of a savage country in this pursuit. My friend, I have an extraordinary incentive to exertion; you see that Mignon charms all—her beauty touches the heart of the redman, even—while her goodness, kindness and gentleness win the friendship of the rough mountaineer. Yesterday I was happy, for Mignon was near me; but to-day I am miserable, for I no longer see her face nor hear her voice."

They rode on in silence, examining closely all the route for miles. Just at sunset Brion struck a fresh trail leading to the water, and both he and Buckeye swam their horses to the other side. It was now too dark to follow the trail with certainty, and they encamped for rest and refreshment. But the partisan could not tranquillize his mind to repose, and finding the effort to sleep irksome, he softly arose the moment he judged Buckeye to be asleep, and passed out of the tent and started anew in search of the trail. He went on until he came to a hill which he climbed and passed over to the other side. At its base was an impassable chapparal, and he turned aside to the south. He soon came to a dell surrounded by red cedar pines, where he found the remains of a fire still smoking.

While Brion stood reflecting whether to continue his solitary reconnoisance or return to Buckeye, he was startled by a low and triumphant laugh near him. Raising his eyes and partially turning round, Brion beheld a spectacle which sent the blood thrilling through his veins with unwonted rapidity; he was surrounded by stalwart warriors whose dusky features looked grim and terrible in the darkness. In advance of the rest, and scarcely three yards from the mountaineer, stood one whose dress and bearing indicated him to be a chief.

"And so the cunning Fox has come to the hunter?" said he, repeating the laugh that had so electrified the partisan. "Has the Fox become a fool that he thrusts his paw into the trap?"

"The most cunning are not always upon their guard, and an old squaw may sometimes surprise the panther sleeping on a tree," said Brion.

"I trapped you once before, but the heart of Ravenclaw was soft. The eyes of Lily-face turned his blood to water. Wily trapper, you will not live to see the next new moon. Last year, Prairiewolf scented you upon Snake River, when you were catching the beaver, but he could not catch you; now he has got his hand on you, and you cannot escape. What have you to say?"

"That I will give you much for liberty," responded Brion.

"Do you give liberty to to the otter when you have taken it? Do you spare the buffalo when you are hungering for his flesh? Do you say to the panther, go in peace, when you have leveled your rifle at her heart? Fox, you have lost your cunning!"

"I have guns and ammunition, hatchets and hunting-knives, beads, bells, and mirrors, and strong horses," replied the trapper.

"It is not so; you have nothing—not even life. Listen! we have a vow to kill the first living thing that came among us. White man, such vows are never broken," interposed the chief.

"I have heard of such a custom prevailing among your people; but it is a cruel and useless one. If I must be sacrificed, it will make but little difference whether I die to-night or three days hence; therefore give me three days' liberty, and at the expiration of that time I will return, when you can fulfill your vow," answered Brion.

"Wa-wa! I was right when I said the Fox was growing foolish! he is getting into his dotage."

"I swear by the Great Spirit that I will return and surrender myself a prisoner, to suffer the death you have determined upon!" added Brion, with emphasis.

"Pale-face, that cannot be! Even if you came back, Ravenclaw might again give you life, but I will not trust you—your heart is not big enough to keep your word. If you came, it would be with your hunters at your heels, with their rifles cocked and at their faces. Prairiewolf is not a child, that he should be deceived by words which are as smoke curling from the top of a wigwam, to pass away into the air and be remembered no more," exclaimed the brave.

The partisan felt a cold, sickly sensation creeping over him; his blood seemed to flow back upon his heart with horror; he experienced an instinctive shrinking that reached to his very marrow. Prairiewolf eyed him, a mocking smile on his lips.

"Prairiewolf, when the Master of Life calls for us, we must go; but the white man has different notions from the savage. His flesh is more sensitive to the fire than the redman's because he had never been taught to despise its tortures. If nothing but my death will suffice, strike your knife into my breast and let me pass at once to the hunting-grounds."

"A squaw might die in that way; a great chief like you deserves a more honorable death."

A brave approached to bind Brion's hands. Resolved to secure a sudden death or escape with his hatchet he struck the savage down at Prairiewolf's feet, and bounded from the dell with the speed of a deer. But there were those after him swift of foot and tireless in pursuit; and having scarcely three yards the start of his pursuers, the mountaineer could hardly hope for success. He was overtaken, carried back, and bound in a manner to preclude the possibility of a second attempt.

"You are not quick enough!" said Prairiewolf, tauntingly. "A boy could run faster."

"But a boy could not do that!" retorted Brion, pointing to the body of the brave whom he had stricken.

"We shall see," resumed Prairiewolf, fiercely, "how will you bear up under the ordeal of the twelve fires!"

"The will of God be done!" replied Brion, commending himself to that Being who is apt to be forgotten in prosperity, and remembered only in adversity. The brave leader felt now that his fate was sealed.

[To be concluded.]

LILIES FOR ROSALEE.

BY FREDERIC B. MARVIN.

RAISE your heads, ye virgin lilies—
Lilies white, so chaste and free!
Bend no more with artless grace,
Mirrored in the water's face—
You shall live with Rosalee.

Lift your stems of shining silver;
Open wide your leaves to me;
You shall live, and never fade,
When you're with the fairest maid—
On the breast of Rosalee.

Lilies, hear you what I'm saying?
Fadeless glories you shall be;
Careful, then, lest wavelets drift you;
Stooping low, I gently lift you—
You shall live with Rosalee.

THE VENTRILOQUIST.

[*Translated from the French.*]

DOWN at the famous Strand tavern, the Coalhole, in London, we were gathered together, one evening, laughing over the amusing scenes of ventriloquism with which that clever comedian Toole had just been edifying us.

A journalist present complimented him somewhat ironically on what he called his "little society-talents."

"These little talents," said Toole, in a grave tone, "have some times a great utility in life; do not despise them. An infinitely small talent may save a world of trouble; nothing is unproductive here below. Let me give you a single illustration.

"Some years ago, I was passing one evening through Drury lane on my way to the Gaiety Theatre, where I was at that time playing a role.

"My attention was suddenly attracted by a pathetic voice imploring charity. I stopped and looked around me. The voice proceeded from a misshapen being, apparently a cripple, crouched in the corner of an archway leading into one of those winding alleys so numerous in this popular quarter. His white hair and beard and cracked voice indicated clearly that the begger was an old man.

"'A few pence for a poor man, sir,' said the tremulous voice; 'I am cold and hungry—oh, so hungry! I have eaten nothing since yesterday.'

"The sight of a young man, however miserable he might have been, would not have moved me. Old cockneys like me are too well posted on all these borrowing schemes which flourish in our town, but this decrepit old age and horrible deformity filled me with compassion.

"'What misery!' I exclaimed, gazing at the old man. 'Is it possible that you are condemned to begging at your age? Have you no sons nor daughters?'

"'Alas! yes, gentleman,' replied the beggar in a smothered tone, as if ashamed to acknowledge the truth, 'but they have abandoned me.'

"'It is infamous!' I added.

"I drew from my pocket a half-crown.

"As I handed it toward the beggar my customary suspicions seized me. Perhaps it was after all a made-up cripple. We actors are not the only ones who know how to disguise ourselves in London.

"'I prefer to assist you more effectively,' I remarked, after an instant's pause.

"'You have a refuge somewhere? A home? Where do you live?'

"I expected now to be enlightened as to the genuineness of my beggar; the slightest hesitation on his part would have put me on my guard at once.

"'Not over a quarter of a mile from here,' replied the cripple. 'I will take you to my lodging, sir, if you like.'

"The earnestness with which he responded occurred to me after the adventure was over; at the time I laid no stress upon it.

"'Very well! go ahead; I will follow,' I answered.

"The beggar started off on his crutches, dragging after him two stumps of legs; and with a hundred protestations of gratitude, made in a warm and fervent tone, he manœuvred rapidly along the muddy and slippery sidewalk of Drury lane.

"It was a dismal London winter evening. A thick, humid fog hung heavily over the macadamized pavement. By the dull, yellow light of the street-lamps the passers-by took on the aspect of phantoms.

"From the doorsteps and windows of the miserable houses in the alleys and courts through which we passed, gaunt, palid faces gazed out upon us, and cut-throat countenances with wolfish eyes glared out into the night.

"Not but that we must acknowledge our police force is admirably organized, for, considering the widespread misery and degradation in London, it is only astonishing that crimes are not twenty times as numerous as they are. But, despite this energy of the police, how many a black deed rests hidden, buried forever in the slums of our great town!

"During these reflections, little reassuring as they were, I gazed after my guide. Decidedly it was a poor devil; that I no longer doubted. I was on the point of

stopping him and sending him on his way with a few shillings. I was almost ashamed of my suspicions. But with a skill undoubtedly acquired by long years of exercise, the beggar advanced very rapidly, turning from time to time to make sure that I was following.

"At last we crossed Covent Garden market, and Long Acre, and entered that hideous quarter which you all know—Seven Dials. The adventure commenced to only half please me.

"'Are we far from your room still?' I asked, catching up with the beggar. 'I haven't much time to spare.'

"As I spoke I drew out my watch, an excellent chronometer of Dent's, of considerable value. Looking suddenly up, I surprised an ugly, covetous glance beneath the beggar's bushy eyebrows.

"'Oh, ho!' I said to myself, 'that's a mighty young eye for an old man.'

"My suspicions returned with triple force; but often our paltry pride over-rules our better judgment. Moreover, with the Seven Dials quarter returned the bustle and noise of London life. Laughs and shouts greeted us on all sides from the public houses and bar-rooms of the neighborhood.

"I determined to push the adventure to its end, the more so as my companion now turned to me and said, in his cracked and flattering tones:—

"'Here is my home, gentleman!' He slipped through the half-opened door of a rickety staircase with the agility I had before remarked. I had difficulty in following him in the nauseating obscurity. The smart rap of the crutches sounded on the steps and served as a guide.

"At the third story the old beggar stopped. I heard him feeling about in the dark, then came the sound of a key turning in a lock.

"'One moment, my good gentleman,' said the trembling voice; 'I will light a candle.'

"Some seconds passed; the dismal glimmer of a tallow candle lit up a room which struck me as tolerably spacious.

"The beggar had slipped behind me, and I now heard the sharp click of the key in the lock.

"I had expected to find a sordid, miserable hole, fitted out with a broken stool, and a bundle of straw in the corner for a bed; instead of which the room was furnished with a certain degree of luxury, and the floor was covered with a rich carpet.

"'What does this mean?' I asked in a stupor. 'You have deceived me!'

"I turned toward the door. The old man had vanished; a man in the vigor of life, a white wig in his hand, his face covered with pencilled wrinkles, looked up at me and laughed.

"'You look surprised,' he said, in a mocking tone. 'There are miracles still in our days, you see. My good legs have come back to me, and my crutches—look there!'

"He pointed toward the corner near the door.

"'Well, what do you want of me?' I asked resolutely enough.

"'I want you to let me have your watch,' impudently answered the man. 'Mine happens to be at the jeweler's just now, and yours looks like a tolerably good one. I'll warrant it to keep good time.'

"After all, it was but one man, and a struggle man to man demands but an ordinary courage.

"But my pseudo gray-beard drew a revolver from his pocket.

"'Now,' said he, holding the muzzle to my face, 'the watch and the purse first.'

"I drew back. Indignation and anger at letting myself into such an absurd trap almost suffocated me; but what could I do against this man armed?

"All at once an idea occurred to me.

"'Imp of Satan! I'll catch you yet!' called a gruff voice behind the beggar.

"Instinctively he turned around. I seized the opportunity to rush upon him and snatch the revolver from his hand.

"'My turn now,' said I, holding the revolver under his nose. 'Open that door this instant, or I'll blow out your brains!'

"The robber looked at me with a stupid air. He was a resolute fellow without a doubt; but the revolver and the mysterious voice together were too much for him. Growling savagely like a bull-dog, he opened the door and slammed it violently after him.

Feeling my way along, I found the staircase, and with some difficulty gained the street. I directed my steps at once toward the Strand. I arrived a half-hour late at my theatre, where reigned the greatest inquietude at my non-appearance.

"I kept the revolver as a 'tribute of war.' And you see,' concluded Toole, "how 'my little talent' of ventriloquism that night helped me out of an ugly scrape."

TRINIDAD ISLAND AND ITS TREASURE.

THE latest story of buried treasure is one just narrated by Mr. E. F. Knight, who in the year 1889 went out to search for a reputed hoard on the island of Trinidad in the South Atlantic. It is a rocky, desolate, surf-encompassed islet, latitude twenty degrees thirty minutes south, and longitude twenty-nine degrees twenty-two minutes west, about seven hundred miles from the Brazilian port of Bahia. Mariners avoid it because of the coral reefs and deadly crags by which it is encircled, and rarely, until recent years, has human foot trodden its shores. Its only inhabitants are very loathsome and destructive land-crabs, numerous sea-fowl, and gigantic turtles. Once upon a time it was covered with a dense forest from beach to summit, but for well-nigh a century the forest has been filled only with gaunt and leafless trees. This dead forest is one of the most ghastly features of a peculiarly ghastly and forbidding island. When and how the trees were stricken by the death-blight, no man knows; but it was probably some volcanic eruption which at one stroke changed a land of fruit-groves and spicy arbors into a forest of desolation, for Trinidad is the centre of a small volcanic patch in the South Atlantic. What vegetation now remains is confined to some tree-ferns and acacia-bushes on a plateau high up among the moutains, and to a growth of wild beans in some of the gullies.

Another peculiarity of the island is that it seems wholly brittle, for landslips are continually occurring, crags falling, ravines filling and opening, and the general configuration altering. As described by Mr. Knight, it seems like one of the forlorn islands of the old sea-romances, on which the bloody deeds of pirates have left a curse, so that the treasure is guarded by evil spirits. The great seas which roll up without any apparent cause, even after days of windless weather, the ever-tottering crags, and all the forces and terrors of nature, seem in combination to keep man from off the secret hoard, while the land-crabs are ugly and evil and diabolical-looking enough to represent the spirits of the bloodiest pirates ever known.

On this desolate spot, there was buried, in the year 1821, a great store of gold and silver plate and specie, which, during the Peruvian war of independence, was being conveyed from the Cathedral of Lima to Spain for security. The vessel conveying it was captured by pirates, who then deposited it in a part of Trinidad known as South-west Bay, marking the spot with three cairns. They left it there, intending to return, doubtless, when Lord Dundonald should cease from scouring the pirate-infested seas; but they fell into the hands of the Spaniards, and were all hanged at Cuba—all save one—a Russian Finn—who about the year 1850 confided the secret of his life and the treasure to a Newcastle captain then in command of an East Indiaman engaged in the opium trade. This Newcastle mariner brought home the secret and the pirate's plan of the island; and some years afterwards, sent out his son, in a Newcastle vessel trading with the Brazils, to look for the hoard. The vessel reached the island; but after beating about for a week, could not find a landing-place, and the captain resolved to give up the attempt. The young man, however, was permitted to swim ashore; and after spending a night alone on the island, where he was nearly devoured by the land-crabs, was hauled by a line through the surf to the boat and taken on board again. He reported that he had identified the spot described by the pirate; that it corresponded exactly with the description he had received from his father; but that a great landslip of red earth had evidently fallen on the treasure, and that not for the whole treasure itself would he spend another night in such a place.

Here, then, was confirmatory evidence of one sort; while an inspection of the archives of Cuba revealed the fact that a gang of pirates who had plundered Spanish vessels sailing from Lima had been hanged at Havana at the very date given by the Russian Finn to the Newcastle captain. Then it was known that a large portion of the treasure which Lord Dundonald reported as existing at Lima—valued by him at over six millions sterling—had never been traced. Some portion of it fell into hands of the Peruvians, and other portions were recaptured by Dundonald from the pirates who had plundered the Spanish vessels. But a large portion remains to this day unaccounted for.

It was so firmly believed in by some very shrewd Tynesiders, that in the year 1885 they despatched an expedition in a bark called the Aurea to make thorough search for it. The mistake was in sending a square-rigged vessel of such large size that she could not be brought near enough to the shore. With great difficulty seven men were landed in a small boat with some tools, and no sooner were they landed than the ship was blown out of sight by a high gale, and could not make the island again for three weeks. By that time the party ashore were so demoralized by deficiency of food, exposure to rain, and the haunting presence of the land-crabs, that they eagerly re-embarked at the first opportunity. They had done very little digging, although they had identified the spot described by the pirate; but they were so emaciated and ill, that the leader of the party determined not to risk the lives of any more of his men, and so abandoned the search.

Besides these, three other expeditions had attempted to disinter the secret of Trinidad Island before Mr. Knight had heard of it. This was only after his return from a cruise in the Falcon, the story of which was given to the world some few years ago, during which he had happened to land on and explore Trinidad without being then aware of the romanatic interest attaching to it. He had discovered a moderately safe landing-place, had followed passes through the mountains, and knew where water was to be found. Thus, when he heard the treasure story, and remembered things about the island which seemed to lend color to the piratical tale, he determined to organize a more thorough search than had yet been attempted.

Thus it was that the "Cruise of the Alerte" was projected. The Alerte was a stout-built yacht—rigged as a yawl—which was purchased at Southampton, and especially fitted out for the work. She was only some fifty tons or so of yacht measurement, but quite big enough for a party of thirteen adventurers and all their provisions and tools for excavation. These tools were very complete, and included hydraulic jacks, forges and anvils, boring apparatus, materials for shafting, crowbars, shovels, wheelbarrows, tents, wire-fencing, etc—enough to furnish a pretty extensive mining. Ample stores of provisions were also taken, and every preparation was made for a prolonged stay, since the reported landslip implied probably the removal of many thousands of tons of debris before the hiding-place could be laid bare.

The company was to consist of nine gentlemen-adventurers including Mr. Knight himself, to whom the others were to pay one hundred pounds apiece, and to yield implicit obedience, each receiving in return one-twentieth of the gross proceeds of the venture. Mr. Knight's contribution was the vessel, provisions, and tools; and further, he engaged four paid-hands, who were not to be entitled to any share of the treasure; but were to be liberally paid whatever happened. Before the Alerte reached Trinidad, the number of gentlemen-adventurers had been reduced to five, and the paid crew changed and increased to five, so that the full number of those who actually engaged in the search was only ten. Unfortunately, among the gentlemen who, from one cause or other, dropped off from the expedition were the only two who had knowledge of photography, ornithology, etc., so that the collections which were expected were not obtained.

Sailing from Southampton at the end of August, 1889, the Alerte made first for the Salvage Islands, which the party had been recommended to try in the first instance for treasure reputed to have been buried there in 1804. This story is, that a vessel from South America for Cadiz, laden with produce and two million dollars in money, was, when within a few days' sail of her destination, warned by a neutral that war had been declared, and that English frigates were watching the whole Spanish coast. Thereupon the captain resolved to run back to the Spanish Main; but the crew mutinied, murdered the captain, buried the money on an uninhabited island, and finally wrecked the ship in trying to make the West Indies.

As the uninhabited island of this story was identified with one of the Salvage group, which lay, after a manner, in the route of the Alerte, it was resolved to make some attempt to test the truth of it. The Salvages consist of three islands between Madeira and the Canaries, and are carefully avoided by vessels on account of the dangerous shoals that surround them. These three islands are Great Salvage, Great Piton, and Little Piton; and it was on Great Piton that the search was to be made. Here a camp was formed, and systematic digging continued for four

days, with no results; and as the information was so vague that the adventurers did not even known if they were on the right island, the search was then abandoned, and the course of the Alerte shaped for Bahia, which was reached on the 2d of November.

Here fresh provisions were taken in, some changes made in the crew, and a little delay caused by bad weather. Finally, sail was set on the 11th of November, and Treasure Island was sighted six days later. Sighted, yes; but it is one thing to sight Trinidad and another thing to land on it, as previous adventurers had found. This, indeed, seems one of the most obstinately inaccessible of all the earth-children known as islands—a lonely ocean-cast-away, as jealous of its seclusion as the Grand Lama of Tibet. The mountains rise sheer from the surf, which ever boils and seethes, even when there is no wind. Their sides are cleft by awful ravines with perpendicular precipices; pinnacles here, and huge cones there, show where masses have been shattered by volcanic commotions, and great slopes of red and black debris betray the changing character of the surface. The peaks tower to three thousand feet of more above the sea, and are ever wrapt in vaporous wreaths, torn and twisted into curious shapes as the winds eddy among the summits. Indescribably savage and grand is the scenery of this weird island, where silence is unknown, and where the sorrow of the sea is never quiet. The roaring of the surf on the beach and up the rocky ravines becomes at times almost deafening, and it is accentuated by the shrill cries of myriads of melancholy sea-birds.

The first thing to do was to land at a sort of natural coral pier that Mr. Knight knew of; but this is some miles from Treasure Bay, and only availed for a preliminary survey-party of two. Afterwards this was used as a place at which to water the yacht, which anchored in the vicinity for the greater portion of the time of the search—Treasure Bay itself being too exposed and dangerous for even a small vessel. Crossing the island by the mountain passes which he had discovered nine years before, Mr. Knight and a companion, after a dangerous and toilsome journey, reached the site of the supposed hoard. They found relics of the Aurea expedition, and they also found, what was better, that a good water supply was available with moderate labor.

"The nature of the scenery around us," writes Mr. Knight, "was now grand in the extreme, and had a weird character of its own that I have never perceived on other mountains. The jagged and torn peaks, the huge landslips of black rocks, the slopes of red volcanic ash destitute of vegetation, in themselves produce a sense of extreme desolation; but this is heightened by the presence of ghastly dead vegetation, and by the numberless uncanny birds and land-crabs which cover all the rocks. This lonely islet is perhaps the principle breeding-place for sea-birds in the South Atlantic. Here multitudes of man-of-war birds, gannets, boobies, cormorants, and petrels have their undisturbed haunts. Not knowing how dangerous he is, they treat their superior animal, man, with a shocking want of due respect. The large birds more especially attack one furiously if one approaches their nests in the breeding season; and in places where one has to clamber with hands as well as feet, and is therefore helpless, they are positively dangerous. As for the land-crabs, which are unlike any I have seen elsewhere, they swarm all over the island in incredible numbers. I have seen them two or three deep in shady places under the rocks; they crawl over everything, polluting every stream, devouring anything—a loathsome set of brutes, which were of use, however, in our camp scavengers. They have hard shells of a bright saffron color, and their faces have a most cynical and diabolic expression. As one approaches them they stand on their hindlegs and wave their pincers threateningly, while they roll their hideous goggle eyes at one in a dreadful manner. If a man is sleeping or sitting down quietly, these creatures will come up to have a bite at him, and would devour him if he were unable for some reason to shake them off. But we murdered so many in the vicinity of our camp during our stay on the island that they certainly became less bold, and it seemed almost as if the word had been passed all over Trinidad that we were dangerous animals, to be shunned by every prudent crab."

When Treasure Bay was reached, the pirate's landmarks were readily identified, and arrangements were made for landing the stores and tools. This had to be done through the surf by means of a whale-boat, for carriage over the difficult and dangerous mountain-passes was out of the question. Landing through the surf was laborious and dangerous enough, but it was effected in a

series of exciting journeys, and then a camp was formed and operations were commenced.

It was seen at once that these would have to be extensive and prolonged, for the exact locality of the cairns under the fallen debris could not be determined, and therefore almost the whole of it would have to be removed. This was done by systematic trenching; while the huge rocks were lifted out of the way by means of the hydraulic jack which had been brought. For three months the whole party labored in turn, ceasing only during the heat of n idday and on Sundays, and they left almost literally not a stone unturned in the ravine where ought to have existed the cavern where the pirates' hoard was deposited. But they discovered neither the cavern nor the hoard.

All hands were not on shore at a time, for at least three were needed to take charge of the yacht, whose anchorage was by no means secure. Indeed, so frequent and erratic are the winds which eddy from the summits of Trinidad, even when it is calm out at sea, that after a while it was determined that it was safer to heave anchor and to cruise off and on the island—drifting away at night, and beating back during the day. When the weather permitted, a boat would be despatched from Treasure Bay to the vessel, or *vice versa*, to exchange news and compare notes; but sometimes for many days together this intercourse was impossible. Then the supply of oatmeal gave out, and Mr. Knight with a couple of hands ran the Alerte all the way to Bahia to get fresh stores. He was so detained by bad weather that when he returned to the island he found the shore-party on the verge of starvation, and just preparing to launch themselves in the whale boat on the open sea in the hope of being picked up.

On off-days, the island was explored by the members of the expedition, who discovered the remains of what had evidently been a Portuguese settlement—several huts and stone walls overgrown with creepers. From appearance, this settlement must have been of some duration; and it would be interesting if some one could evolve its history from Portuguese records. It may be, indeed, that the non-discovery of the treasure and the existence of this settlement have some connection. Who knows to whom the Russian Finn communicated his secret before he met the Newcastle captain? This is assuming that the pirate's story was true, and really there seems no good reason to doubt it. In spite of his non-success, Mr. Knight, with all his knowledge of the island, has very little doubt that the treasure of the Cathedral of Lima was once really deposited on Trinidad. Whether it has been already removed, or whether it lies buried under some other landslip, cannot be said, and will probably never be known.

Certainly, the Alerte party made a gallant and persevering effort to recover the treasure, without stopping to consider what moral or legal claim they had to it should they discover it. When it was resolved to abandon the search, the weather was becoming so bad that every hour's delay meant danger. Happily, everything was got on board safely, and the yacht started for the other Trinidad, in the West Indies, where the party was broken up, and each man went to his own home, rich in experience of a novel sort, if not in the treasures of Lima.

FAME.

BY FRED F. CLYDE.

SAID one whose name is known to fame,
"Ambition is a glorious cheat."
Youth's eager eyes behold the prize,
Glowing with frenzied heat.

Fame is a star, bright from afar,
Luring the soul of fire along,
Upward and on, from dawn to dawn,
Like treacherous siren's song.

A world of joy it shows the boy,
Glories no gem or sun hath caught;
But when he stands on fame's high lands
Where is the thing he sought?

Alas! the prize deceives the eyes,
A phantom that fadeth to nought;
Scintillant star, when seen afar,
Dull meteor stone when caught.

ELMIRA, N.Y.

OUR SET; OR, WHO IS SHE?

BY CHARLES P. ILSLEY.

CHAPTER I.

THE town of Campont—rather I should say city, for it enjoys civic honors—is comparatively a small place in point of population, but territorially speaking, it is quite extensive, and, like the national capital, may be called a city of magnificent distances.

It is divided into four districts, so that the city forms a cluster of large villages, each settlement having its specific appellation, as Old Campont, Campont Haven, East and North Campont.

Campont is an academic town, the institutions of learning being located in Old Campont, where most of its importance is derived.

As is the case generally with academic towns, Old Campont is noted for its exclusiveness. The social lines are very strictly drawn and very jealously guarded. No one is allowed the privileges of "Our Set," as it is styled, until his or her claims have been duly canvassed.

It would be difficult to clearly set forth the requisites necessary to obtain admission to the charmed circle. Those who preside over it appear to be governed by very arbitrary as well as very eccentric rules. Moral and intellectual worth does not seem to be particularly regarded by them. But it is noticeable that one with a plethoric purse finds no difficulty in obtaining easy entrance.

In this, however, the guardians of Our Set in Old Campont are by no means singular. "Worth makes the man, and want of it the fellow," was an axiom announced by Pope. The poet was mistaken; he should have said "wealth." Possibly there may have been a typographical error.

Campont Haven, which is full of life and activity—a wide-awake, bustling place, with quite a metropolitan air about it—is looked down upon by quiet, sleepy, respectable Old Campont, and only a choice few of its residents are deemed fitting associates by those who constitute Our Set in the latter district. I am happy to state, however, that the unrecognized bear up very philosophically under their deprivation. As for the denizens of East Campont, they are decidedly vulgar, the bulk of them being mere workers—mechanics, petty shop-keepers, and the like—*canaille*. The upper district, North Campont, is in every respect *terra incognita* to the elite.

Although I have selected Old Campont for the scene of my story, it is not that I consider it singular in its exclusiveness. You will find that in almost all small communities, especially if they happen to be seats of learning, the same general characteristics prevail, prominent among which is an assumption of superiority by a certain class; in other words, a spirit of snobbishness. On what ground this assumption is based is a social problem I have not been able to solve. Notwithstanding that it prevails extensively in Old Campont, I beg of you not to look upon its inhabitants as a peculiar people.

Old Campont was in a slight flutter. Mr. Richard Perdan had recently completed a palatial mansion, and invitations had been sent out for what in olden times was called a "house-warming," but which the Perdans dignified with the title of "Reception." Of course no one outside of Our Set received the coveted pasteboard, for the Perdans were wealthy, and consequently moved in the "first circle." It is true, time was when Mr. P. resolved in a humbler sphere—when he found it difficult to make both ends meet, and when he was of no more account than ordinary mortals. But as by economy and perseverance he slowly acquired property, he gradually emerged from his lowly state, cast off his slough, as it were, and in process of years became one of the anointed.

On the evening in question, the Perdan mansion was in a blaze of light, and there was a constant flocking thitherward of the gay multitute. The Germanias welcomed with their inspiring strains the thronging guests. Occupying rather a conspicuous position in the *salle d'audience* was a group of young ladies, who amused themselves in watching the new arrivals, scanning the styles of dresses, and commenting on their wearers.

In the course of the evening an elderly lady entered the room, accompanied by a maiden apparently in the last of her teens,

whose appearance created quite a stir among the group just noticed. She was very fair. Her dress was simplicity itself compared with the elaborate toilets of most of the young ladies. She wore scarcely any ornaments; and yet so becoming was her attire, so peculiar her style of beauty, that the simplicity of the one enhanced the brilliancy of the other.

As the couple passed the group, the young lady seemed on the point of saluting one of their number, but catching the cold haughty look that was bent upon her, she checked herself, and proceeded on her way, something like a derisive smile playing over her features as she made a low remark to her companion.

"Who is she?" was the question simultaneously asked by several of the little knot of maidens.

"Very presuming, I must say!" said the one whom the young stranger was on the point of recognizing.

"But who is she, Miss Trafton?" asked one of the group of the lady who had just spoken. "She seemed to recognize you."

"I really cannot inform you, Miss Canby, who or what she is," rather crisply replied the one named as Miss Trafton.

"Where, then, have you met her?" persisted Miss Canby. "She certainly would have spoken to you, had you not frozen her with one of your looks."

Miss Trafton gave a light laugh as if the remark pleased her.

"I have seen her two or three times at the house of Mrs. Doten, my dressmaker. She is a niece of hers, I believe, who has recently visited her."

"A dressmaker's niece, indeed!" was Miss Canby's horrified exclamation.

"Yes. Mrs. Doten took the liberty of introducing her to me, and meeting her there a number of times, I made some conversation with her. But I did not dream that she would presume on an acquaintance thus formed!"

"I do not think that she will again, Lizzie," laughed Miss Canby, "although she received your rebuff with a very impudent smile."

"Low-bred effrontery! I wonder the Perdans should have invited her."

"Perhaps she may be a relative," suggested one of the group. "Do you remember her name?"

"Dobbins, or some such common one, I think, although I did not pay much heed to it," was the scornful reply of Miss Trafton.

"She is not a relative," remarked one of the party. "I inquired of Jennie Perdan, who informed me that she was invited at the especial request of her grandmother, who was acquainted with her mother."

"The old lady has peculiar notions of gentility," sneeringly remarked Miss Trafton. "Perhaps she thinks that we may conform to them; but possibly she may be mistaken. For one, I am not disposed to associate with dressmakers' nieces!"

This settled the matter, and at once tabooed the stranger from Our Set, for Miss Trafton stood at its very head, and her dictum was a law unto its members.

Mrs. Reynolds, the mother of Mrs. Perdan, was peculiar in her notions of what constituted gentility—peculiar, that is, inasmuch as they differed from those of a certain class or clique of which Miss Trafton might be looked upon as the representative.

The old lady was blessed, or cursed, with a good memory. I use the word cursed, because from the pains evidently taken by many to forget certain facts, a good memory, we may reasonably infer, is deemed by them a curse. You will find a vast difference in people in regard to this faculty. Some there are who possess it in a wonderful degree, and take delight in tracing back their ancestry through generation after generation, and the further back they can follow them the greater is their pride and gratification. Others there are who seem stone blind as to the past, and are wofully ignorant, even of their grandmothers and grandfathers. I have found many such cases among Our Set in Campont.

As I have said, Mrs. Reynolds was gifted with a good memory. She remembered the time when fortune had dealt less kindly with her than of late years; she remembered when she was obliged to resort to the needle to eke out her not over-abundant means; she remembered when Mr. Perdan, now reveling in wealth, carried on a small grocery and variety store, and only by the closest application and the most rigid economy, managed to make both ends meet, as the saying is, and she remembered it to his advantage, too.

She also remembered, much to their chagrin, the origin of many of the young ladies who now held their heads so high, and who looked down so supercilliously on those who

had not the distinction of belonging to Our Set—this one's mother, or aunt, who took in sewing, taught school or gave lessons in music, for a living; that one's father, or grandfather, or uncle, who shoved a fore-plane, swung a sledge-hammer, handled the trowel or awl, or dealt out groceries by the ounce and pound, or pins, and needles, and tape, by the paper or yard, for the same laudable purpose.

Remembering these things, and being a woman of great good sense, Mrs. Reynolds manifested a very catholic spirit. She did not believe, nor could her daughter, Mrs. Perdan, persuade the old lady to think otherwise, that because a woman honestly earned her living she forfeited her claims to respectability; that the mere possession of wealth should command our respect, or that it should be regarded as evidence of superiority.

That as society is at present constituted there should be class distinctions, that intellect, station, wealth, occupation, should occasion lines of demarkation, she did not object; but that this or that class or clique should set themselves up, and arrogantly claim to be, *par excellence*, "good society," she did not and would not allow. She had no faith in nor respect for upper crustdom, and took somewhat of a malicious pleasure, when opportunity offered, of making it appear ridiculous and in exposing its folly. Briefly, the old lady was an inveterate foe to all shams.

CHAPTER II.

"AH, good-evening, Miss Trafton, Miss Canby, Miss Gates—ladies all!" said a young man, stepping out from the hangings of a bay-window, where he had been an unwitting spectator of the scene described in the last chapter.

"Good-evening, Mr. Arlington," was the general response, for Frank Arlington was an especial pet of the set. All the ladies greeted him with their most bewitching smiles, between whom—so a little bird whispered to me—a covert rivalry existed as to who should stand best in his good graces.

He was a splendid looking fellow; not what you would call handsome, perhaps, but there was something about him that caught the fancies of the ladies, and the gentlemen as well. He had an erect and well-proportioned form, a manly bearing, and every lineament was stamped with intelligence.

In the Campont Law School, of which Arlington was a member, he was a man of mark. His disposition was lively and genial, his manners easy and wholly void of affectation, and he had that peculiar indefinable way with him, so "taking" with the fairer sex, and with the rougher, too, as for that matter.

Notwithstanding that, as I have said, he was the pet of Our Set, he was remarkably unassuming. Courted as he was—and he could not but be aware of it—his pride was not flattered nor his vanity excited. The truth was, he valued the preference shown him at its true worth.

He was not at all ambitious to shine as a lady's man—he was too sensible a fellow for that. He had a quiet correct insight into the characters of his lady associates, and their adulation was prized accordingly. As for the rest, he was known to be of a very wealthy family, and moved in the "first circles" in his native place.

"A very pleasant gathering we have this evening," he said, addressing Miss Trafton.

"Y-e-s—a little mixed," was that lady's somewhat ambiguous response.

"Mixtures are very agreeable sometimes. Variety is the spice of life, you know, Miss Trafton."

"That depends on the component parts, Mr. Arlington, whether they are to our taste or not."

"Oh, as to that, a little acid or a little bitterness, like discords in music, tends to heighten the general effect. Simple saccharines are apt to be insipid."

The half-quizzical tone in which this was uttered, and the smile that accompanied the remark, rather puzzled the ladies.

"Speaking of music, Miss Trafton," he continued, "will you not favor us with some? That delicious thing of Schubert's has been haunting me ever since I heard you last sing it."

The lady was a trifle vain of of her musical powers, which were, perhaps, a little above mediocrity, and she did not require much solicitation. As the party moved towards the music-room, Mr. Arlington asked:—

"Who was the lady that entered the room a short time ago, with Mrs. Reynolds?"

"I really cannot inform you, as I have not the honor of her acquaintance," said Miss Trafton, with a touch of hauteur.

"She is not a resident here, I presume? Her face appears new."

"I think she is not."

"You do not know her name?"

"Dobbins, I think some one said," replied Miss Trafton, emphasizing the name with the slightest possible sneer.

"Dobbins—not very poetical!" said Arlington, with a smile. "I cannot say that I admire the name, however I may be disposed to its owner."

"I dare say," remarked Miss Canby, sarcastically, "you may see it exhibited in the 'Square' one of these days—'Doten and Dobbins, Dressmakers.'" Whereupon a titter ran round the circle, and the speaker plumed herself on saying something quite smart.

"Indeed, a dressmaker!" said Arlington, in mock astonishment. "If the young lady exhibits as much taste in the dresses of her customers as she does in her own, she must be highly prized by you.

"I am serious," continued the young man, detecting a sneering smile on the countenances of his listeners. "I do not know when I have met with a more becomingly dressed lady—that is, to my taste."

"I did not suppose that you were so observant, Mr. Arlington, of the attire of ladies. It is a pity the lady did not hear your compliment!" Miss Trafton tried to smother her spiteful tone with a light laugh.

"Oh, I think a great deal of dress," rejoined Arlington, "and always take notice of a lady's. In my opinion it is a very good criterion of character. My judgment of persons is formed, I must confess, in no small measure from their apparel. The attire of ladies, from its variety, of course offers a broader field than that of gentlemen. There is comparatively but little dissimilarity in the garments worn by gentlemen, still there is sufficient, I think, to afford a test of character."

"May I ask, Mr. Arlington, what is your favorite style? Perhaps the question is superfluous, however, after the high encomium you have passed on the taste displayed by Mrs. Doten's niece!"

"I will inform you, Miss Trafton," said Arlington, with an amused smile. "My sentiments are embodied in that well-known passage of Thomson:—

"'A native grace
Sat fair proportioned on her polished limbs,
Veiled in a simple robe, their best attire,
Beyond the pomp of dress; for loveliness
Needs not the foreign aid of ornament,
But is, when unadorned, adorned the most.'"

The conversation was brought to a close, on the entrance of the party into the music-room, by the general demand for a song from Miss Trafton. This compliment the young lady had been accustmomed to receive at all the social gatherings she was in the habit of attending. Indeed, she would have been sorely disappointed had she failed to receive it, for she was the acknowledged musical belle of the place. Therefore, after the usual excuses, that she was out of practice, that she had not sung for an age—all stereotyped fibs—she was at last persuaded to take her seat at the instrument.

She got through her first piece very creditably, it being within easy range of her voice and not very difficult. It would have been better for her had she confined herself to music of like simple character; but casting her eyes around, she discovered among those drawn to listen to her performances, Mrs. Reynolds and the young stranger.

The latter, from some cause or other, had excited in her mind an unwonted interest, and against her she felt a growing prejudice, or antagonism. As if for the purpose of astonishing Mrs. Doten's niece, in her next attempt Miss Trafton seemed to exert all her efforts.

The buzz of applause that followed her first performance having subsided, she was requested to favor the company with another. Nothing loath, she dashed at once into an Italian *bravura*, which was far beyond her power to render, even with ordinary correctness. She managed to get through with it, however, without absolutely breaking down; limping over difficult passages here, and slighting them there, winding up with a grand instrumental crash, her vocal powers tested to their utmost. Of course she received a surfeit of compliments, no one seeming to be aware of her imperfections.

CHAPTER III.

IN stepping back from the piano at the commencement of Miss Trafton's performance, ostensibly to make room for some ladies, Arlington found himself—was it by design?—in close proximity to Mrs. Reynolds. As soon as the performance was ended, the old lady said, addressing her companion:—

"Permit me, Miss Deblois, to present my friend, Mr. Arlington—Miss Deblois, Mr. Arlington."

"Deblois! a vast improvement on Dobbins," thought the young man, as he made his obeisance.

"You are fond of music?" asked the young lady, after the usual commonplaces.

"Exceedingly, Miss Deblois"—he rather liked that, after Dobbins!—"it would be deemed heterodox to deny a fondness for it. Indeed, I am more than fond of it—I love it."

"I am glad to hear that, for I have a passion for it myself, and it is pleasant to know that others are in sympathy with you."

By little and little Arlington and his new acquaintance became quite engrossed in the discussion of their favorite topic. He soon ascertained that she was no tyro, but possessed a thorough knowledge of the science of music, treating it as if she had made it a study.

He learned incidentally that she had pursued her studies both in Germany and Italy. He found too that she was a lady of superior intelligence in other matters; that she had seen much of the world, and had largely profited by her observation.

Arlington was struck with the freshness and originality of her ideas, and the fitting language in which she clothed them. Their range was loftier and more extended than were those of the generality of his lady acquaintances. Then the personal charms of the young lady aided not a little his growing interest in her.

She was, indeed, very beautiful. Her form was faultless in all its proportions. Her features were exquisitely moulded and full of character. In her manners there was a graceful ease, an intuitive refinement, which evinced an inborn gentility. When in repose, her face would win your admiration from its pure loveliness; but when she engaged in conversation on subjects of more than ordinary interest, her large brown eyes would kindle, and her countenance light up with a marvelous radiance, reflecting so perfectly each passing emotion that it hardly needed language to interpret it.

Was it strange that Arlington should be held in delighted thraldom by a being so every way captivating, whose exterior graces were but a type of those which adorned the mind and heart?

In the course of their conversation reference was made to Miss Trafton's singing, and Arlington asked her opinion of her last performance. To this Miss Deblois demurred. She was averse to criticising—it would be unkind indeed to animadvert on a performance undertaken to please others. Although it was easier, she said, or most people seemed to find it so, to dwell on the demerits rather than the merits of a performer, she preferred to reverse the rule—to overlook what she deemed faulty, and to commend what her taste or judgment approved.

On being further urged, and learning from Mrs. Reynolds that Miss Trafton made great pretensions, and was not sparing of her criticisms on others, and therefore was a fair subject of remark, Miss Deblois guardedly said:—

"The young lady possesses certain qualities of voice which are fully excellent, especially in the medium register; but she lacks cultivation."

"Why, my dear child, that is the very thing she prides herself upon, her cultivation," said the old lady.

Miss Deblois gave a light laugh.

"She should have kept on the scales a year or two longer," she remarked, "before she attempted song. Shall I ever forget my old Florentine master, how he kept me drilling at them! In regard to the piece last sung, I think the lady was a little too ambitious in selecting it. It is one of the most difficult that she could have chosen, and wholly beyond her powers. It is but fair to say that very few professional artists can do it justice. If the lady would confine herself to music of a simpler character, her efforts would be more likely to prove successful, and her audience, perhaps, would be better pleased."

"I fully agree with you," said Arlington, who wondered at the mildness of the criticism, especially when he recalled to mind the rebuff Miss Deblois had received on entering the room, to which, it will be remembered, the young man was an unwitting witness.

"My dear Julia, why will you not favor us with a song?" asked Mrs. Reynolds. "It is an age since I have heard any good music. Mr. Arlington, do try and persuade her."

"If my wishes could have any weight with Miss Deblois, I would certainly proffer them," said Arlington. "I see that Miss Trafton has left the instrument; shall I not conduct you to it?"

"I shall be happy to gratify your wishes,"

said the young lady, commencing to take off her gloves. "I do so the more readily because I dislike to be urged, and because—would you believe it?—I have a little malice in my disposition, just the slightest grain." A merry smile played over her features as she glanced archly in the direction of the group of young ladies who had gathered about Miss Trafton.

Although Miss Deblois was not aware of it, Arlington fathomed at once her meaning, and chuckled to himself in anticipation of the triumph that awaited the stranger; for although he was totally ignorant of her powers, he felt confident that she would succeed.

"Have you any choice?" she asked, as she took her seat, handing to Arlington her gloves and fan.

"Suppose that you try this," and Arlington placed before her, "I would that my love," arranged from Mendelssohn's part song.

Her first touch of the instrument was enough to satisfy one that she had a full command over it. When her rich full voice swelled out, clear and liquid as a bird's, the annoying buzz, which in large assemblies usually accompanies ordinary performances, was hushed, as if by magic. Until the last note was uttered, the deep silence was unbroken, and then the plaudits that broke forth simultaneously on every hand afforded unmistakable evidence of her perfect success.

She would have left the piano, but at the earnest solicitation of Arlington, backed by the suffrage of all around her, she consented to sing again. This time she selected "*O Mio Fernando*," from Donizetti's opera, "La Favorita."

From the very opening note she enchained the attention of the audience; but when she had fully launched upon the tide of song—had abandoned herself to the spirit of the composition—she seemed to lose all consciousness of her surroundings, and poured forth her impassioned notes, not to the listening throng about her, but to some one present only in her thought, on whom alone she lavished her unbounded stores of melodious wealth.

Her auditors stood as if touched by an enchantress' wand—silent, motionless. Here and there a hasty catching of the breath, a deep hurried respiration, testified to the marvelous spell she had thrown over them.

Arlington cast a glance upon the singer. She appeared wholly enwrapped in the music; not as a performer, but as one borne unresistingly away on the flood of harmony of which she was the unconscious creator. A divine beauty illumined her countenance, as if it had undergone transfiguration. In every expression could be seen

"The mind, the music breathing from the face."

The last note died away, and still the company moved not—still the profound silence remained unbroken. Noisy applause would have been almost a sacrilege. That pervading stillness was the highest compliment that could have been paid to the young lady, and she so accepted it.

"Mere verbal compliments on your performance, Miss Deblois," said Arlington, as he conducted the fair singer back to Mrs. Reynolds, "would be entirely out of place. The spell of silence you have cast upon all is more eloquent than words. I can only tender you my poor thanks for the great gratification you have afforded me."

"Thank you, Mr. Arlington, you have amply repaid me," said the young lady, a faint color flushing her cheek as she bowed her acknowledgements.

"Look here, naughty child!" said Mrs. Reynolds, clasping the young lady's hand in both of hers. "Do you see these tears? Tears in my old eyes! do they not reproach you?" And she wiped away the glistening drops.

"May you never shed more bitter ones, my dear Mrs. Reynolds," was the affectionate response.

The closing words of Mendelssohn's song, the first performance of Miss Deblois:—

"Still there, my love, it will haunt thee,
E'en in thy deepest dreams,"—

were fully verified in Arlington's experience, for long, long was he haunted with the witching strains heard that night.

CHAPTER IV.

IMMEDIATELY that the spell thrown over the company by the triumphant debut of the fair vocalist was broken, the whispered inquiry passed around the room, "Who is she?" But no one seemed capable of imparting the desired information. In the meantime many evinced a disposition to seek an introduction to the stranger, the young gentlemen especially.

Presently it was noised about in a mysterious manner—possibly Miss Trafton or Miss

Canby could have thrown some light as to how the report originated—that the young lady was a niece of the fashionable dressmaker, Mrs. Doten, and would probably become a partner in her establishment.

This astounding rumor operated as a wet blanket on the elite, who were about seeking the acquaintance of the accomplished stranger. A dressmaker! That would never do! And so they wrapped themselves in their icy mantles of exclusiveness, and turned away from the sweet singer as from one contaminated.

Several kind-hearted old ladies, however, after the party, called on Mrs. Reynolds, and knowing that she was a friend of the young singer, had many suggestions to make concerning her, and manifested not a little interest in her welfare. They could not, of course, associate with her, but they would condescend to patronize her.

A young lady so gifted, they said, should not be content to devote herself to the drudgery of needlework. A person endowed with such talent, with such a magnificent voice, could command her own price as a teacher or a public singer. They were a fortune to her. It would be a pity that the world should be deprived of the benefit of her extraordinary musical powers. They had no doubt but that a very select class, composed of ladies moving in the first circles, could be formed in Campont, who would give a liberal price for tuition, if Miss Deblois would take the matter in hand. Here was an excellent opening for the young woman; would Mrs. Reynolds consult with her in regard to the project, etc., etc.?

Yes, Mrs. Reynolds would mention the subject to Miss Deblois, who would, no doubt, feel under deep obligations for the interest manifested in her behalf. She would venture to thank them in her name. All the time a covert smile lurked around the eyes and at the corners of the mouth of the old lady, threatening every moment to break out more demonstratively, and which culminated in gentle merry laughter after her visitors had departed.

No one who had made the inquiry, "Who is she?" was half so interested in it or puzzled him or herself over it so much, as Frank Arlington. He had learned from Miss Canby, and from the rumor set afloat, what she was. But he was not satisfied with this. He had his doubts. Mrs. Doten's niece she might be, but that she had been educated and brought up to the occupation of a dressmaker, he could not believe.

Without doubt there were many intelligent, refined and accomplished dressmakers, but it was rare that you found one so intelligent, so refined, so accomplished as Miss Deblois. It was not common for dressmakers to receive such a thorough education; they were not accustomed to go abroad to perfect their musical studies, or to acquire foreign languages; they were not habituated to the highest intellectual circles, as it was very evident Miss D. had been; they did not, as a general thing, possess that polished ease, that graceful careless, independent bearing, that indescribable but unmistakable tone, so characteristic of the young lady.

So thought Arlington, and the more he dwelt upon the subject the less able was he to arrive at any satisfactory conclusion. He did not attempt to conceal from himself the fact that the young lady had made a deep impression upon him. Her great personal beauty, her extraordinary talent for music, and above all, her vast intellectual superiority to the young ladies he was in the habit of associating with, although they moved in the "first circles," and she, according to their estimation, ranked low down in the social scale, gave her pre-eminence in his mind.

The interest Arlington felt to learn something of the antecedents of Miss Deblois arose from curiosity rather than a desire to ascertain her social status. It was sufficient for him that she received the favorable countenance of Mrs. Reynolds. Even if she were reduced to the necessity of seeking employment as a dressmaker, that fact would not weigh a feather with him. He had no reverence, but little respect for caste. He recognized class distinctions, but he would not suffer himself to be governed despotically by them. In brief, he was an independent, self-reliant man, who did his own thinking, and who regulated his actions according to his own sense of right and propriety.

As for Miss Trafton and her set, Miss Deblois was not deemed of sufficient importance to be made a subject of remark. And yet, strange enough, seldom was there a meeting of the favored few, that the lady in question was not in some way brought into discussion. At such times, you may be sure, her beauty, her dress, her manners, her style of singing, and, above all, her pretentions, underwent a pretty thorough criticism. If

there is any truth in the ear-theory, Miss Deblois' left ear must have tingled very severely at times!

But a short time after the Perdan reception, two or three of the ladies belonging to Our Set chanced to meet, when Miss Canby spoke of Miss Deblois' singing.

"She has a passable voice," remarked Miss Trafton, "but I cannot say that I admire her style."

"Mr. Arlington is in raptures with it," said Miss Canby, well aware that Arlington's commendation of the stranger would nettle her friend. "He says that there was not one of all the celebrities he heard in Paris, who, in his opinion, surpasses her."

"Mr. Arlington may entertain such opinions as he pleases; I think that she is monstrously affected!" rejoined Miss Trafton, a grain tartly.

"Horribly affected!" chimed in Miss Gates, who was Miss Trafton's echo.

"It is curious how people differ," remarked Miss Canby; "what you call 'affectation,' he styles abandon. He spoke particularly of the 'naturalness' of her singing. There was not the least attempt at display, he said. She sang from the impulse of feeling—poured her whole soul into the music; you could see that by the rapt expression of her countenance."

"I was unable to discover anything particularly expressive in her features," was Miss Trafton's sneering reply. "Had I made as close a study of them as Mr. Arlington appeared to, I might have been more successful perhaps."

"We do not all see alike," said Miss Canby, preparing another thorn. "There's Professor K——, by the way; he says her pronunciation of the Italian is perfect, and Professor W——, who says she speaks German as correctly as a native, both alluded to the spirit and vivacity of her conversation and her 'speaking face.' They eulogize her as irresistibly charming."

"Bah! I am fairly sick hearing her praises!" said Miss Trafton. "It is just like the gentlemen; they are caught by every new face, or charmed by every new voice. As long as the novelty lasts they are in ecstasy; when that is worn off their devotion ceases."

"That is very true," rejoined Miss Canby, adding, with a light hectoring laugh, "and some of us may congratulate ourselves that they do weary of their new divinities, and in time return to their old worship. But I had thought that Mr. Arlington might prove an exception. Instead of that, however, he seems more infatuated than all the rest. I met him with Miss Deblois on —— street last evening, and he was so much engrossed with her that he quite slighted poor me. It really looks as if there were something serious there, Lizzie; does it not so to you?"

"It is a matter of perfect indifference to me, I assure you, Miss Canby, whether there is anything 'serious' in it or not," haughtily rejoined the lady addressed, who evidently winced under the meaning smile and glance that accompanied her companion's remark. "If Mr. Arlington prefers to associate with dressmakers and the like, he has unquestionably the right so to do, however questionable his taste may be!"

Satisfied with the wormwood that she had administered, Miss Canby amiably suffered the subject to drop, and the conversation drifted into the usual inanities in which gossiping young ladies are prone to indulge.

CHAPTER V.

AS Miss Canby had mischievously insinuated, it really did look as if there were something "serious" in the attentions paid to the stranger by Arlington.

Since his introduction to her he had assiduously courted her acquaintance, framing the most ingenious excuses to call upon her, and happening by the most singular coincidences to encounter her on her walks.

It is very much to be feared that the "Moot Courts" and "Parliaments," of which Arlington was a prominent member, and which he had made it a point to regularly attend, were sadly neglected, and that Mrs. Reynolds' pleasant drawing-room, instead of the "Law School," wooed his evening steps, where attractive musical soirees were of weekly, sometimes semi-weekly, occurrence.

Being extremely fond of music, and one of those dear old ladies—Heaven bless them!—who, although age has frosted their hair and graven wrinkles in their brows, keep their hearts unfrosted and unwrinkled, Mrs. Reynolds had instituted these parties, primarily for the gratification of herself and her more juvenile friends. She had, however, another object in view. She desired to bring about more cordial relations between the young ladies of the place and Miss Deblois, for

whom she manifested quite a motherly interest.

She may have had still another object in view; there is no telling. The old lady had a keen observant eye. She had detected, or thought that she had detected, a growing attachment between her young friend, the singer, and Mr. Arlington. I do not say that her purpose, through these musical parties, was to further this mutual attachment. The idea this moment has entered my head, and I thought I would make a note of it.

Be this as it may, she had invited a number of the musically gifted of her young friends to meet on stated evenings at her house for mutual entertainment. A goodly number gathered at the first meeting, made up principally of those belonging to Our Set, including, of course, Miss Trafton.

But the good intentions of Mrs. Reynolds seemed likely to be frustrated. Late in the evening, when Miss Deblois made her appearance, and was invited to take part in the performances, Miss Trafton and her clique at once grew frigid and stately. So marked was the change in their demeanor, that it became at once apparent to all, and Arlington felt his blood boil at their insolent effrontery.

If, however, they expected to abash the stranger, they were signally mistaken. As if inspired with feelings akin to their own, she treated them as cavalierly as if, in her estimation, they were the merest nobodies.

It was decidedly refreshing to note with what nonchalance she regarded their supercilliousness. She moved among them cool, collected, self-poised, with a very queenlike air. To their chilling politeness she opposed an icy courtesy. Calm and unruffled, with not the slightst manifestation of resentment, she seemed to regard her antagonists with a high-toned superiority, a lofty condescension, which completely baffled their arrogance, and left her the victor instead of the vanquished.

The members of Our Set did not condescend to attend another meeting, "to expose themselves to the brazen impudence of a dressmaker's niece," as Miss Trafton indignantly protested. Notwithstanding this defection, the parties were kept up, the places of the absentees being filled with a more amiable and a more effectual class, not quite so *tonnish*, perhaps, but vastly more agreeable.

Arlington and Miss Deblois constantly attended the meetings, and it soon began to be considered an understood thing, that the former should call on the latter and accompany her to and from the place of entertainment. They got into this way naturally, as it were, without any previous agreement to the effect; so that, if at any time Arlington perchance made his appearance alone, the inquiry was at once made, "Where is Miss Deblois?"

As a consequence of this state of affairs we all can predict what followed. A rumor soon circulated that Miss Deblois and Mr. Arlington were engaged; whereat all upper-crustdom held up its hands in holy horror. The report, I believe, was premature, but neither of the parties thought it worth while to contradict it, nor did they permit it to affect the intimate relations that existed between them.

One day a young lady thickly veiled called at Mrs. Reynolds', and on being ushered into that lady's presence, she asked, in a hesitating manner:—

"Is this Mrs. Reynolds?"

"That is my name," was the old lady's reply, as she gazed curiously on her caller.

"I have come from Mrs. Doten, madam, to work on your dress," said the young lady, demurely.

"To work on my dress! There must be some mistake"——

"No, madame," interrupted the caller, "I think I am right. I am the dressmaker's niece!" added she, dropping a curtsy, at the same time raising her veil.

"You little madcap hussy!" exclaimed Mrs. Reynolds; "what an excellent actress you would make! But sit down, Julia, I have something to say which interests you very much." And the old lady's face was wreathed in quizzical smiles.

"You must know, Miss Deblois," she continued, "that a number of my lady friends called on me some time since with a proposition concerning you, which I should have mentioned to you before."

"I am very grateful, I am sure, for their interest in my welfare," said the young lady, with great apparent candor. "Pray what did they propose?"

"That you should take a class of misses and give them lessons in music; the class to be very 'select,' and the pay very liberal, understand. I promised to mention the subject, but it slipped my mind until this moment. I also ventured to thank them in your name for the suggestion."

"I am very glad that you did," said Miss Deblois, "for they were entitled to it."

"They seemed to think that you would find it more remunerative, and certainly much more 'respectable,' or 'genteel,' than dressmaking. Now, child, what do you think of it?" And there was a merry twinkle in the eyes of the genial old lady.

"They are very, very kind, and I am exceedingly grateful," replied the young lady, with the same sobriety of tone and manner she had maintained all along; "pray what would be your advice? I am a novice, you know, in teaching, although I dare say I should become used to it in a very little while. Perhaps it will afford me a better living than dressmaking, and if—and if"—— Here the sober lines of her face gave way, and a merry peal of laughter rang through the room, in which the old lady heartily joined.

"Just think of it," said the latter, wiping her eyes, "dressmaker and music-tea-cher-cher-cher!" A fresh burst of laughter prolonging the word.

It was some time before they became sobered down to rational conversation.

"Take off your things, Julia, and stop to tea. There will be somebody along to see you home in the evening, I dare say. I wish to have a good chat with you."

The young lady complied, and during the "chat" that followed Miss Deblois remarked:—

"I hope that Mr. Arlington—that you did not consider me rude the other evening, or that I betrayed too much feeling."

"Feeling! why, dear child, you were a veritable iceberg! As for rudeness, I wondered at your forbearance under such provocation. Mr. Arlington I saw was in a towering rage. I was on nettles, just to whisper a few words in Miss Trafton's ear. They would have lowered her haughty crest, I'll be bound. My promise to you only restrained me."

"I am very glad that you remembered it. Perhaps the lady deemed her superciliousness a mark of good breeding; a very common mistake a certain class of minds are prone to fall into."

"Very likely. She and her set seem to ignore the fact, that the dominant characteristic of a truly well-bred and refined lady is courtesy; as also, that an insolent bearing, especially to those in a lower walk of life, is as positive a mark of a vulgar mind."

"Pray tell me on what do these ladies rest their claims for superiority?" asked Miss Deblois. "Is it birth, intellect, manners, or wealth?"

"On neither, my child, unless, in a few cases, the latter. The most of them are mere weeds of yesterday, who would be mortified to recognize their ancestors. As for their intellects, poor things! their minds would be crushed under the pressure of one solid, sensible idea. Flirting and gossiping are their loftiest ambitions. In regard to their manners, you have had a sample of them. The truth is," continued the old lady, who was on her hobby, "they belong to a mushroom aristocracy, such as is usually found in a place like this, and which is based solely on assumption. I am pretty well acquainted with those who compose Our Set here, and there is scarcely one of them in possession of a quality that should distinguish her from the common herd, unless it be arrogance, which too often verges upon impudence."

"Yours is not a very flattering picture," said Miss Deblois, with a smile.

"It would not be truthful if it were," was Mrs. Reynolds' rejoinder. "But let us talk of something else. I know that I am apt to become excited, and to express myself strongly when on this subject; and I dare say that you set me down as an irritable old lady. I cannot help it. I abominate all pretence."

"And yet you are one of the elect?" was the arch inquiry of the young lady.

"Yes, I suppose that they rank me among them. But I belong to the elderly class, who do not carry their high notions to such ridiculous lengths as the younger set; or if they do, they have the tact to modify their deportment by a graceful dignity. Though they may exhibit a little hauteur, they are not offensively rude. There, I will not say another word! Let us have some music, Julia, and exorcise all evil spirits."

CHAPTER VI.

MRS. REYNOLDS was right in her conjecture that some one would happen along to accompany her guest home. In the course of the evening Arlington dropped in, and expressed great surprise, and greater gratification, in meeting with Miss Deblois, as though her being there were any secret to him!

The gentleman received a most cordial greeting. His visit was very timely; they had been hoping some one would drop in, said Mrs. Reynolds. A very pleasant evening was passed, and Arlington, of course, escorted the young lady home.

It was an evening of rare beauty. The moon was at its full; the heavens were flecked here and there with soft downy clouds; a gentle breeze just stirred the tree-tops and attempered the atmosphere; the air was resonant with the dulcet notes of Campont nightingales, *videlicit*, tree-toads. In fact, it was one of those nights when it seems a shame to keep within doors.

In addition to the splendor of the evening, the truly pleasant walks about Campont, green and verdurous with trees and shrubbery, and so retired, tempted the young couple to prolong their walk.

During this walk Miss Deblois announced that it was her intention to leave Campont in a few days.

Leave Campont! Arlington had been thinking with regret of his own departure at the close of the term, a few weeks distant, but he did not dream of a separation before then. He was taken completely by surprise.

The announcement hastened an event that he had for some time contemplated with no small degree of anxiety. He was wholly ignorant of the antecedents of his companion. All that he knew for a certainty was that she was an orphan. He had no doubt, from the grace and polished ease of her manners, that she had been accustomed to the most refined society.

Arlington's hpyothesis was, that in her education and accomplishments she had received all the advantages that wealth could bestow; that on the death of her father she found herself, as, alas, many thus luxuriously reared find themselves on the disruption of the domestic circle by the death of its head, without material resources—found that the riches she had anticipated had long before taken to themselves wing—that she was poor, in a word, and dependent on her own exertions for a livelihood.

This was Arlington's theory, and he had determined, being independent in his means, to make her an offer of his hand, and, if she accepted it, to restore her to her former position in life. The time and the occasion seemed propitious, and before they parted for the night the important overture was made.

It was neither accepted nor rejected. After expressing her sense of the honor he had done her, she stated that there were certain circumstances that forbade her giving a final answer at that time. She said she could not explain herself that evening, but that she would communicate what little she had to say to him in writing in the morning. Although the young man had not accomplished all that he desired, he parted from his lovely companion in any but a desponding spirit.

The next morning Arlington awaited the promised communication with not a little impatience, and when he received it he could not repress a slight fluttering of the heart as he opened the daintily written note. Its tenor was as follows:—

"Respect for myself, as well as for the generous confidence you repose in me, impels me to explain the rather equivocal position in which I have been placed since I came here. It is proper to state, that although I am known as the niece of Mrs. Doten, she is not a relative; if she were, I know of no reason why I should disown the relationship.

"She attended my mother during her last illness, and remained in our family until it was broken up on the death of my father. During her residence with us we were accustomed to address her as 'Aunt Doten,' a habit I still retain. My visit to Campont was solely on her account. I elected to reside with her because I did not wish to go into society, preferring retirement, and because I desired as much as possible the society of one who is largely entitled to my gratitude and love. Otherwise I should have accepted the kind invitation of Mrs. Reynolds, a dear friend of my mother, and been *feted* instead of frowned upon.

"I said that I did not wish to go into society. Indeed, I soon found, when it got noised around that I was a niece of Mrs. Doten, that 'society' was not disposed to receive me. I was very well contented to be excluded.

"At the solicitation of Mrs. Reynolds, I attended the reception of her daughter, Mrs. Perdan. On my entrance I was about speaking to a young lady whom I had met and been introduced to at Mrs. Doten's, but I at once found by her manners that I had taken an unwarrantable liberty. Her remark which I overheard, 'dressmaker's niece,' informed me of the mistake I had made. I

was not surprised at the feeling she manifested, nor did I resent it. I have seen the same unamiable spirit too often exhibited to be affected by it. On the moment a girlish freak possessed me, I determined to permit the impression to pass current that Mrs. Doten was in reality my aunt, and Mrs. Reynolds at once favored the innocent deception. It seems, however, that rumor made me not only a niece of the worthy woman, but that I was to be a future partner.

"The punishment for the little artifice to which I lent myself, you, Mr. Arlington, witnessed on the first musical party given by Mrs. Reynolds. Perhaps it should be taken as a warning against indulging in such frivolities hereafter!

"But let me now come to what more directly interests us. Rising superior to the prejudices of 'caste,' you last night did me the honor of soliciting my hand. It was to me a proof, although I did not need it, of the sincerity of the sentiments you professed, and, believe me, I duly appreciate them.

"My sole reason in withholding an answer, was a desire that you should meet me in the circle in which I have been accustomed to move, before finally deciding on the matter that will vitally affect our happiness. I shall proceed from here to Philadelphia, and thence go to Newport to spend the warm season. We shall probably meet there, as you tell me that you propose visiting the latter place during the coming vacation. If on a renewal of our acquaintance your sentiments should remain unchanged, I will not conceal from you that it will afford me the highest gratification. Pray excuse this long epistle," etc.

In a few days after this letter was written Miss Deblois took her departure. Some little surprise was manifested by those who hoped to secure her services as music teacher that she should slight so good an opportunity. But she soon passed out of mind, and her name was never mentioned, save that occasionally, Miss Trafton, Miss Canby, or some of that clique, would make sarcastic allusions to her in the presence of Arlington, who received and parried them with the greatest good-nature.

The time hung heavy on that gentleman's hands after the lady had left. He formerly had whiled away his leisure time in the law library, hunting up authorities for some case in hand, but now he had lost all relish for the calf-bound volumes, and instead of spending his evenings in "Moot Court," or "Parliament," as had been his wont, he was given to solitary wanderings and musings by moonlight in the sequestered walks of Campont. Term time, however, at last closed, and with a sigh of relief Arlington packed up for a flying visit home, and then—hey, for Newport!

With the arrival of warm weather the fashionable world of Campont also took flight, some for the mountains, some for Saratoga, and some for the seaside. Of course the Traftons and the Canbys were off with the rest.

Although the shady avenues, the quiet rural aspect of Campont, would seem to render it the place of all others for a sojourn during the hot months, yet fashion demanded the exodus, and so Our Set generally left their comfortable, cosey homes, and subjected themselves to all the annoyances and discomforts of a popular resort, leaving Bridget and Patrick in the full enjoyment of what they vainly sought.

The Traftons and the Canbys were for some time undecided where they should pitch their tents. But the young ladies having heard that Arlington intended to visit Newport, they put their heads together, and with a little skillful management turned the scales in favor of that place.

Miss Trafton, in particular, flattered herself, that with her formidable rival out of the way, she should easily accomplish certain designs she entertained against the peace, liberty and happiness of the young gentleman just mentioned.

CHAPTER VII.

FOR nearly a week Arlington had been at the famous watering-place, and not a glance had he caught, not a lisp had he heard of his lady-love. Every fresh arrival was eagerly watched, but all in vain.

He soon began to look upon Newport as an intolerable bore, and to wish himself anywhere else, away from the frivolous crowd.

One evening he was strolling with an acquaintance about the place, when, as he was passing one of the many private cottages that abound there, his attention was arrested by the voice of a lady singing. He stopped abruptly and listened. Full, mellow and birdlike, the notes swelled upon the evening air.

That voice, could he be mistaken in it? He lingered with breathless interest until the performance closed. Curiously enough it was Mendelssohn's "I would that my love," the very piece that he had selected for Miss Deblois at Mrs. Perdan's reception.

"Who lives here?" asked Arlington, eagerly, as the strain ceased.

"The Hon. Mr. ——, of Philadelphia," was the name given, a gentleman known throughout the land for his eminent station and immense wealth.

"His establishment is considered the most perfect in the place," added his friend. "And, by the way, Arlington, the divinity who presides over it, the one whose voice has cast a spell upon you, his niece, is unsurpassingly lovely, a style of beauty that would just suit your taste. She has, besides, still more solid charms, being an heiress of fabulous wealth."

"What is the name of this paragon?" asked Arlington, in a jesting manner, seeking to conceal his interest in the answer.

"Her name is Bentley, and she would be decidedly the belle of the season, were she not averse to accepting the rather equivocal honor."

"Bentley," said Arlington, with a touch of disappointment in his tone; "strange that I have never met with her."

"Not at all; she lives quite retired. She only rides out occasionally with her uncle, avoiding as much as possible the fashionable drives. Some will have it that she is rigidly, perhaps the better term would be frigidly, exclusive; but those who know her best aver that she is directly the reverse, being remarkably affable and not in the least uppish."

All that night that voice and that strain, "I would that my love," ran in Arlington's head, haunting, like witch-music, his waking and his sleeping hours.

The next day Arlington sauntered upon the beach, watching the bathers—strolled along the favorite walks scanning the promenaders—took a long drive, eagerly scrutinizing each turn-out. But vain was his quest.

It was the height of the season; where could she be? The inquiries he had made of those who were posted in regard to the arrivals and departures, if a party by the name of Deblois was or had been there, were answered in the negative. Perhaps sickness had prevented the visit? And yet in the last letter Mrs. Reynolds had received from her, she mentioned that she was on the eve of departure for Newport. Some sudden obstacle must have arisen to prevent or postpone the trip.

Insufferably dull to the young man appeared Newport, although never before so thronged and gay. He had many acquaintances there; every night there were reunions, hops, music, etc., but they had no attractions for him, and generally he kept himself aloof from them.

He was sitting "solitary and alone," on a cliff, gazing in the offing, dotted by numerous yachts and other small craft, scarcely noticing an object in his abstraction, when his companion of the night before approached him.

"Hey, Arlington, my boy, dreaming as usual!" was his salutation. "One would deem you in love, or suffering some other grievous calamity."

"It is terribly dull here; don't you find it so, Bingham?"

"Dull, man! there never was so brilliant a season. I say, old fellow, you're getting in a bad way. What the deuce has come over you? You must go to the hop to-night—a very *reherche* affair at the Union, the very *creme de la creme*, and the grand hop of the season. *Ecoutez!* Miss Bentley is to be there, Frank, her first appearance; the lady, you know, whose voice you were so crazy to listen to last night. Will you go?"

Arlington had a curiosity to see the lady whose voice bore such a striking resemblance to one he remembered so well, and he did not require much urging.

"By the way," said his companion, as the two strolled away from the spot, "there's a big swell here from New York, as rich as—muck—excuse the odorous comparison, but it is so *apropos*—who has avowed his purpose of wooing and winning the peerless Bentley, the conceited puppy! He woo her, he win her! the idiot!"

"Who, or what is he?" asked Arlington, smiling at the contempt manifested by his friend.

"Some Tompkin, or bumpkin, who has made a lucky hit in Wall Street. There he goes, the gilded calf!" pointing to a flashy looking young man, just then dashing by in a tawdry turn-out, resplendent with gilt and varnish.

"Egad, Arlington," added Bingham, as they ascended the steps of the hotel, "imagine the imperial Bentley mated to such a thing as that!"

"But I have not seen this paragon, remember."

"No, but you will see her to-night; and all I have to say is, take care of your heart, my boy!"

It was well along in the evening when Arlington and his friend entered the brilliantly-lighted hall. There was a pause in the dances, and the two were slowly making their way through the richly-dressed throng to the upper part of the room, where there appeared to be more space.

There was a small knot of ladies and gentlemen engaged in lively conversation, who seemed to attract more than ordinary attention. A marked deference appeared to be shown them, the crowd refraining from intruding upon their little circle, although one of the party was subjected to a battery of eyes constantly leveled at her.

"There she is!" said Arlington's companion, "the lady in point-lace dress, whose back is towards us. She is conversing with Judge Peyton. The other gentleman is the famous Senator ——. She binds all to her chariot wheels!"

"She has a splendid figure!" was Arlington's admiring reply. "And if her face—By heavens, it is she!" he abruptly exclaimed, as the lady at that moment turned her face towards them.

"She? Who?" inquired his friend, with not a little curiosity, noticing the sudden start of his companion and the flushing of his cheeks.

Oddly enough, similar manifestations of astonishment were elicited from other lookers-on, merely from the lady's change of position.

That afternoon the Traftons and Canbys had arrived at Newport. They had come too late, or were too much fatigued, to participate in the festivites of the evening, if indeed they could have procured cards of admission.

As they could not mingle with, Miss Trafton and Miss Canby determined to be spectators of the gay assemblage. For this purpose they had stationed themselves at one of the piazza windows where, not exposed to observation themselves, they commanded a good view of the interior of the hall.

The fame of Miss Bentley's wealth, beauty, position and superior intellectual endowments had already reached their ears, and they had a very natural curiosity to see one who was the theme of so much admiring comment. They were accompanied by a gentleman friend who was well "up" in all matters relating to Newport.

From their position they had a full view of the little group already mentioned, and the lady with her back towards them was pointed out as the much talked of Miss Bentley.

"What a perfect figure!" was Miss Canby's candid remark.

"What exquisite taste in her dress!" echoed Miss Trafton.

"Yes, and what magnificent diamonds!" added the former, with an envious sigh.

"I wish that she would turn her head that we might get a sight of her face," rejoined Miss Trafton.

As if in obedience to the wish expressed, the lady turned full towards them.

"Miss Dobbins, as I live!"—"Miss Deblois!" were the joint breathless exclamations of the two ladies at the discovery they had made, while a blush of mortification crimsoned their cheeks as their thoughts reverted to their treament of the lady in Campont.

Full and ample would have been the revenge of the "dressmaker's niece," for all the slights she had suffered, could she have witnessed the chagrin of her concealed spectators.

The reader may, perhaps, faintly imagine the feelings with which they gazed upon one, the "observed of all observers," whom they had, in their foolish pride, looked down upon as unworthy of being received as an associate. In the pleasing indulgence of such agreeable feelings, and in the hope that their reflections may prove profitable to them, I take leave of the young ladies.

I shall not attempt to portray the emotions of Arlington when he recognized in the regal Miss Bentley the unassuming, neglected Miss Deblois. I think that he would have been better pleased had he met with her in a less exalted position. When he knew her as the niece of Mrs. Doten, he did not deem it condescension on his part to solicit her hand; but now he seemed to think that it would be condescension on her part to bestow it.

He hesitated for a moment. Should he claim her acquaintance? These questions were soon solved. When he approached her, the sudden joyful start of surprise that she gave, the quick eager extension of her hand, the telltale blush which mantled her

cheek, the warm cordial greeting, swept away at once and forever all distrust from Arlington's mind.

"If I might accept this kind welcome as an augury, my happiness would be complete," said Arlington, in a low voice, as he took the hand held out to him.

"If so great a boon can be secured by so simple a process, you would be very unwise not to do so!" was the significant rejoinder, as the lady returned his gentle pressure.

Thus, then and there, the compact was sealed that bound their hearts in an indissoluble union.

"Why, my dear Julia," asked Arlington, a few evenings after, as they sat in her uncle's villa talking over her visit to Campont, "did you appear there under an assumed name?"

"It was not assumed, Frank. My name is Julia Deblois Bentley. After my chilling reception, a girlish freak led me to drop my patronymic. I should have disabused your mind in regard to it, but in the hurry of my departure forgot to do so."

"It will be an endeared name to me," said Arlington, with pardonable fervor, "as associated with her who first enlisted my love."

As the conversation of affianced lovers, however interesting to the parties themselves, may not be particularly edifying to the general reader, I here close my report.

A YARN ABOUT PIRATES.

BY ROSHOW BEZONE, JR.

WHEN I was a midshipman, sixteen years of age, I was on board the American frigate Dasher, which ship was lying in Whampoa Reach, in the Bocca-Tigris, at the mouth of which is situated the colony of Hongkong. The captain one day asked me if I would like to accompany him to Canton, whither he proposed going shortly in a "sampan," as the native boats are called in that part of the world. This sampan is a boat with canoe-shaped bows, and on the after part is a small house, or often simply a round-shaped roof, each side resting on the gunwale of the boat, and made of bamboo or stout cane, usually open at both ends, so as to render communication to or from the forepart and the stern easy. In this house the children and women live, and here all the cooking is done. Here, also, the puppy dogs are dressed for the noontide meal. I shall not soon forget one morning, when a few of us middies were pulling about in a ship's boat, seeing a pretty young woman come out of the cabin, and go to the fore part of the sampan with something that appeared alive in her hand. We soon heard a pitiful yelp, which drew our attention to her, and were horrified to see the fair creature passing a knife with one hand into the throat of the miserable young cur (especially fatted for the purpose, as they always are) with the utmost nonchalance, at the same time holding it over the side of the boat to let the blood drain. On seeing that we stopped pulling, she looked at us laughing, and disappeared into the cabin, carrying the dead and bleeding puppy.

The oars are worked from a little deck, or, if the boat is of small dimensions, from "thwarts," or benches fitted into the side, in a similar manner to our American boats. The wife of the owner generally steers with an oar, and stands abaft the house, where there is just sufficient space to do so. At Whampoa and other inland parts of China, there are large floating towns consisting of these sampans, all moored together.

I gladly accepted the captain's invitation, as I had not yet seen Canton—the great city of which I had heard so much as a boy, and I was always desirous of purchasing a crape shawl and some ivory and filagree card-cases, which they manufacture so beautifully, and used to sell (for I am writing of the days when our trade with China was very small) at very moderate prices, and not as now, when, the demand for these articles being great, the price asked is proportionately exorbitant. The captain also asked Mr. Henry, another midshipman, the senior in the berth, to accompany us, and a petty officer, of the name of Thomas.

At that time piracy was rampant in Chinese waters, and the government was most supine in its efforts to check the evil, which had assumed gigantic proportions, and in its audacity, I suppose, could be paralleled in no other quarter of the globe. A large fleet of war junks lay distributed at Canton, Whampoa, and other places on the river, but it was marvelous to see how they made literally no attempt to put it down. Every day, cases of wholesale robbery accompanied with murder and torture, were reported to the mandarin commanding the naval forces, who listened, but did nothing. Under these circumstances, all foreigners took the precaution of never leaving their ships unless in pretty good force, and well armed; for the high hand was the only thing these pirates respected. Only a few days before our trip, an unfortunate skipper, who had gone up on business to Canton, on his way back was supposed to have been murdered, with the whole of the native crew, for he was never heard of more, and the sampan was picked up floating down the river without a soul in it. Europeans, in fact, took the law into their own hands, and whenever these pirates were encountered they were shot down without mercy; and they were not behindhand in retaliating, for woe be to any one caught by them alive; death was the mildest punishment inflicted on such unfortunates. We were therefore rather surprised at the captain going up with only three men besides himself, but on his being spoken to about it, he only laughed and said, "It was all right—we could take care of ourselves."

Captain R—— was a tall, stout man, who had been all over the world, and experienced strange adventures, and, like some men inured to danger, had grown careless. When a youth, he was picked up half drowned by the savages, and was with them for two or three years, until he managed to effect his escape by swimming off to a Dutchman anchored in the offing. His face had been by them tattooed, but the tattoo could not conceal the kindly expression of his features, for a kinder-hearted commander I never sailed with. Mr. Henry was asked to accompany us for a purpose. He was a powerful young man, and although not more than twenty, the most unerring shot with a rifle I have ever seen. Anything within 600 yards was a dead certainty, and he possessed a splendid rifle, that he always cleaned and kept in order himself. About this weapon he was very particular, and never lent it or allowed any one even to fire it. Generous to a fault about other things, he never would have his firearm touched. The petty officer was an old "sea dog," who had been in more than one pirate fight, and had lost two fingers of the right hand on one occasion in a desperate encounter with them in the Straits of Sunda. He often used to recount to me this and other of his adventures. We looked forward eagerly for the morrow. Henry was half the night cleaning his gun and making ammunition, and one of the officers lent me his rifle, which engrossed a good deal of my attention.

At length the wished-for morning broke bright and clear, and we promised ourselves a good day's amusement. There was plenty to see on our way; everything was new. I know no place so full of interest and novelty as China. The inhabitants are like no other race, and their manners and customs are different from those of other people. Their country, their buildings, their ships, everything is peculiar, and calculated to engross the attention of all observant visitors.

We loaded the sampan with plenty of good things, and carefully stowed away a regular armory of rifles, and a magazine of ball cartridge. There were twelve rifles taken all loaded, and I don't know how many rounds of ammunition. We pushed off at eight o'clock, in as brilliant a morning as I have ever seen. The air was soft and balmy, and a gentle wind was blowing, thereby tempering the heat of the sun, which was, however, not at all overpowering. The crew consisted of four rowers, and a man who had taken the place of the female at the stern. We had procured a good sampan, which had a reputation for great swiftness.

Our journey up to Canton was without any event of moment, except to us the interesting one of opening the basket of provender and making a second breakfast, for our morning meal had been a hurried one. One of us kept watch all the way on the banks, among the reeds, and up the small creeks which abound here, for these latter are the places where the pirates "most do congregate." The natives raised one or two false alarms, for in their fear hardly a breeze could blow the long rushes or agitate the tall stalks in the "paddy" fields, but their imagination immediately fancied they discerned hidden enemies. We reached our

destination in safety, and commenced our sightseeing and shopping. I purchased several articles of native manufacture, and when we had all got what we wanted, we turned our steps to a refreshment house and had a good dinner, consisting of numberless dishes, each of which you are supposed to partake of. After another stroll, we wended our way back to our sampan, and the crew having regaled themselves during our absence, we set off on our return voyage.

The distance, if I remember correctly, from Canton to Whampoa is fourteen miles, or thereabouts, and we took care to start some hours before the day closed in. When we had got about half way, we began to joke and laugh about Chinese pirates, and the captain expressed his opinion that there was a great deal of exaggeration respecting their ubiquity in these rivers; for here we had been half a day afloat, and yet had not seen even a sign of their presence. Some one advised our discharging the rifles as we were getting so near home, and we were talking of doing so, when an event happened that changed the opinions of all as to the truthfulness of the stories current of the numbers and boldness of these miscreants. The steersman, of a sudden, in a low, agitated voice, called to the captain and asked him to look ahead, a little way ahead only, at the reeds on our starboard bow, as he was sure he saw them in motion. This time, he said, it could not be the wind, as there was none blowing.

Up we all jumped quickly, and strained our eyes eagerly to the spot which he indicated by his outstretched hand. There was no mistaking it, for sure enough, there was a violent waving to and fro of the long rushes, which here grow in some places considerably above the height of a man's head. The native rowers turned their faces, and at once saw our danger; but like most Easterns, it seemed to paralyze their energies, and instead of using every endeavor to escape, they directly dropped their oars and commenced to lament their fate, beating their breasts. The helmsman began to turn the boat round, but Captain R—— promptly put a stop to all this. He took up his revolver, and in a manner that carried the conviction that he would act up to his word, threatened them all with instant death unless they resumed their oars and gave way to their utmost ability.

The miserable creatures, perceiving it was a choice of deaths, preferred the less certain contingency, and hastily took hold of their oars, which were secured to the "tholes" by lanyards, and therefore had not fallen into the water. They pulled furiously, keeping their eyes now fixed upon the muzzle of the revolver. Thomas had, in the meantime, seized the steering oar, and the boat, which had not yet fortunately lost its way, sprang ahead. We were almost abeam of the dreaded place, which, on nearing, we discovered to be a narrow creek, and we now saw that our worst conjectures were realized. They were pirates concealed, for three large boats, somewhat resembling canoes, now appeared, one of them filled with men, who were in the act of pushing off, and the others were being hastily prepared. Our object was to pass their haunt ere they got out in the middle of the stream; for did they succeed in doing so first, of course they would intercept us. We might have turned back, but that the captain would not hear of. It seemed like running into the lion's mouth; however, our ship lay ahead, and we must reach her, or perish in the attempt.

It was a case of "neck or nothing." We three officers stood before the deck-house with the rifles all at our feet, and with one cocked ready in each of our hands. Captain R—— ordered us to reserve our fire. It was a trying moment. I grasped my piece firmly in my hand, determining to do my utmost, however small it might be, and my messmate Henry said, "Let us, at all events, sell our lives as dearly as possible." He looked the picture of cool determination, and was quite self-possessed, although pale. We knew well what would be our fate did we fall into their hands; at the best, a violent end on the spot—but what was much more likely, should we take any of their lives in the conflict, a lingering course of the most refined torture, at last relieved by a cruel death. Bodies daily floated past the ships as they lay at anchor at Whampoa, with limbs and fingers cut off, and with eyes, and noses, and other features maimed, the work of these monsters. It was a moment of intense anxiety, for every hope of safety rested on the exertions of a few moments. Could we pass the head of the creek before our pursuers were well clear of the shore? That was the momentous question.

The native boatmen had now, in a measure, recovered from their panic, and went to their work, for they saw certain death

before them were they captured; whereas, should we effect our escape, they knew that not only would dear life reward their efforts, but they might also expect "bucksheesh" from the Feringhees. For Captain R——, when he got them to their duty, promised each man five dollars on reaching the Dasher—to their minds a dazzling reward. One boat was now afloat and shoved off; but something appeared to delay the other two. This delay of a few moments was our salvation. The vessel that was ready to chase did not seem so large as the others, and as she would not therefore draw so much water, this accounted for her taking the river sooner. There could not have been less than thirty men in her, and we could make out that she carried wall-pieces (or large muskets mounted on swivels and fitted to the gunwale), which throw grape-shot, and are very destructive at short ranges. We were now about fifty yards from her, and in a few moments succeeded in doubling the creek's mouth. This was the most important point gained, but the chase was only now to commence.

To strike terror into us, they filled the air with shouts and yells of triumph, and soon opened a hot fire on us. The bullets at first came flying and ricochetting round the sampan, but at length they got our range, as we became unpleasantly aware by the accuracy of their aim. Several balls struck the planking, and the oars were twice hit, but near the "loom," or handle, and fortunately were not broken. We were about eighty yards in advance of them. In consequence of the distance and the motion of the gunwale, they discontinued discharges of grape from the wall-pieces, which they had at first used. We were, meanwhile, not idle. The top of the bamboo roof made an admirable rest for our rifles, an advantage which our pursuers did not possess, and we were not slow in making use of it.

We could hardly have wished for a better mark than two boats full of men pulling abreast (the third was astern), and, to tell the truth, our fire was rapid and very effective. This we knew by the screams of the wounded that every now and then rose high above the shouts of exultation, and we also saw several bodies thrown overboard from out the living mass. It was intensely exciting work, and being the first time I had ever deliberately sought to take human life, a wild feeling of ferocity (described by the poet as the "rapture of the strife") seemed to take possession of me, to the exclusion of all "compunctious visitings." It was music to our ears to hear the death yells of the pirates, and usually some exclamation, such as "Potted another," "That's cooked his goose," succeeded a hit, or else, "A little more elevation," or, "Steady! starboard a little," greeted an unmistakable miss on our part. We soon made the painful discovery that they were gaining on us, though but slightly, and this was no doubt caused by their boats' crews being constantly relieved by fresh relays of hands. Just then, two bullets struck poor Thomas, who was much exposed in his position; one hit him in the leg, and the other struck him on the back, in the region of the heart. He jumped up in the air, gave a scream and fell forward, but a little sideways, and rolled over into the water, when he immediately sank.

The pirates saw their success, and shrieked out their fiendish joy, supposing probably that we were certain of falling into their hands; but their hopes of success were destined to be shortlived. They could easily count our numbers, for our three heads were visible above the top of the sloping roof, though they were not aware that there was another person in the boat besides ourselves and the oarsmen. Of course we could not stop to pick the poor fellow up, for by doing so we should have sacrificed all our lives; besides, he was doubtless killed, as we did not see him rise. The captain now ordered the old helmsman, who had kept himself carefully under cover all the time, to resume his place at the steering oar; but the miserable wretch, on his knees, implored the commander not to send him there, as, he said, he was sure of being killed. It was no time for parley, and so he was briefly told to do as he was desired, or abide the consequences; and there was no mistaking what they would be, for Captain R——, having recourse to his old unanswerable argument, clapped his revolver to the ear of the suppliant in a manner that made him regain an upright position double quick. In spite of the pattering bullets, he clambered over the house and took his place with a look of despair, and we had no further trouble with him afterward.

It is strange what cowards most Orientals are in the face of danger which may be warded off; but when certain death stares them in the face, they are calm and com-

posed in a remarkable degree. I have seen the same Chinese, when going to be beheaded, walk as quietly and seemingly unconcernedly to their fate as if it were an every-day occurrence, and, like the eels in the proverb, they were accustomed to it. They are all fatalists, and say with composure—it is their "nusseeb," or fate. It was necessary we should have a man abaft, as besides steering us through the reaches, he materially assisted the boat by "skulking." As I was saying, our enemies sensibly gained on us. This only stimulated the boatmen to increased exertion. Mr. Henry's trusty rifle dealt death and havoc in their still crowded midst, and we also did our best. A bullet struck the helmet-shaped solar "topee" or hat of the captain, and knocking off part of the brim, whizzed away harmlessly. He jerked it straight on his head with a smile, but said nothing. It was no time for joking. Matters looked very black, and it seemed very problematical whether we should escape with our lives, or meet a dreadful fate at the hands of these incensed savages.

Suddenly the foremost boat stopped, and we, seizing our advantage, gave way with redoubled energy, and a hearty cheer, the first we had yet given. We had hit them and caused a leak, between wind and water. This damage appeared to be soon repaired, and the chase was renewed; but the enemy's craft had lost some way, and we quite recovered out lost ground. Our crew were sweating profusely, and looked very exhausted; but still rowed pluckily and well. We strained our eyes in the hope of some aid turning up—as an imperial war junk or two, or some English man-of-war boat; but nothing in the shape of assistance appeared, and we continued the unequal fight. Our position was most critical, for had any of our oars been smashed or carried away, the delay in replacing it might have proved fatal; and again, were any more of our number killed or wounded, more especially a boatman, our escape must have been hopeless. The sampan swayed to and fro as it cut through the still water. We had early in the chase lightened it by throwing overboard the little ballast, and everything of weight it contained. At this time a curious incident occurred. Two large herons in their flight crossed the line of fire, and one of them received a bullet from our opponent, which knocked the bird over.

The situation had now become most critical, as our men showed symptoms of fatigue; when, to our great joy, it began to be evident that the pirates had nearly enough of it, for there was no doubt that their strokes were less hasty, and their cheers were waxing more and more feeble, and had not that same confident tone as of yore. Presently, our hopes were verified by some of their oars being laid inboard, and then a parting yell of disappointed rage succeeded, and all efforts to capture us ceased. At this intimation of defeat the fainting energies of the crew revived, a hearty round of cheering burst from us in response to our foiled enemies, and we all shook hands with feelings of thankfulness, congratulating each other on our escape. We were rather premature in our congratulations, for a farewell volley rattled over the waters from astern, and well it was the pirates knew not the effect of their last despairing discharge. Strange to say, a bullet struck Henry on the right wrist, lodging there, and of course rendering his arm powerless. That arm had done terrible execution, and had the successful shot been fired early in the chase, there is small probability that I should be here to chronicle this narrative; for we had little doubt that the loss of life sustained by them was very great, and that this chiefly, and not fatigue, induced them to give up the pursuit. Fortunately, they had no idea of their success; for the knowledge of the fact that the man who had wrought most havoc in their ranks was disabled, would have inspired them with fresh courage.

Poor Thomas's death was a source of much regret. He was a brave man, and as good a seaman as ever stepped on a ship's deck. I was the midshipman in charge of his top, and many a time had I seen him hauling the weather reef-earing out when blowing great guns at sea, and when it was almost as much as an ordinary man could do to hold himself on by clinging to the jackstay. We never recovered his body, and whether it fell into the cruel clutches of the pirates to be mangled by them, or washed up and down in the river with the tides, we never discovered.

Our first care was to bind up Mr. Henry's arm and stay the hemorrhage. The pain he suffered was very great, but he endured it stoically, and did not complain. Nothing further took place to disturb our safe return, and right glad we were when we got among

the shipping. On coming alongside, every assistance was given to the wounded officer, and we all drank his health when I recounted the day's adventure in the midshipman's birth. His wound, after the ball was extracted, became very troublesome, and caused him much suffering. At one time the doctor proposed to amputate his arm, but poor Henry's love for rifle-shooting would not induce him to hear of it, and ultimately the limb was saved, and he quite recovered its use. We never discovered the extent of the loss sustained by our opponents in that eventful chase, but it must have been very considerable.

If this "Yarn about Pirates" that I have been "spinning"—to use the nautical phrase—has wiled away a pleasant half hour for my readers, I shall feel that that day's danger and excitement were not endured for nothing.

THE STORY OF A QUEEN.

IN AN apartment of the Castle of Valence, in Poitou, the northern boundary of the Aquitanian dominions, a lady was sitting alone, save for the presence of a very beautiful little dog which lay asleep on a cushion by her side, with its long silken ears resting on her arm. She was repeating all the pet names and diminutives with which one would address a child.

"Where can our master be, my pretty one?" she said, softly. "He is a recreant knight thus to desert lady-love and thee. If he comes not back to-night, he shall not find us, shall he, pet?" A low moan was all the dog gave. "What aileth, thee, beauty?" as the creature started up, flew to the window and stood there with his fore paws upon the sill, in an attitude of troubled expectation. "What aileth thee, beauty? Is he coming indeed?" The dog uttered a deeper moan, almost approaching to a howl. "Fie, fie, Leon, that is no way to greet thy master."

Ere the beautiful lady could soothe the petted creature out of his unwonted surliness, the door opened and the noble gentleman, whom she addressed as the Count d'Eu, entered and hastily greeted her.

"A messenger has arrived, Lady Isabella, summoning you to return home immediately to your parents, in order to pay your devoirs to King John of England."

A shade of discontent passed darkly over the handsome face of the lady, as she answered:—

"So suddenly! Truly, it seems but slight courtesy to the Count de Lusignan to leave the castle in such haste. I would Hugh were come!"

"It is but for a brief space, perhaps, dear lady. I know not how long my brother may be detained; but it may be that you will have time to get through with this unwelcome court ceremonial and return to Castle Valence long before Hugh draws rein here again."

"Then you advise me to go?" she murmured, half pettishly, like a spoiled child.

"Nay, dear lady; I would not willingly dispense with your bright presence; I should dishonor the devotion I profess to bear to my brother's betrothed bride. But royalty will have its devoirs; and therefore I trust the Lady Isabella will not deem me discourteous if I do not urge you to stay. But you will come back, dear lady! Hugh will miss his beloved, and I shall not know how to account to him for your absence in any way that will make him sensible of its necessity."

The Lady Isabella bowed and retired to her chamber, from whence she descended in a short time to the carriage that soon bore her away from Castle Valence—never to re-enter it.

It was the day of King John's entrance into Aquitaine as its recognized sovereign; and the father of Lady Isabella, Count Aymer of Angouleme, and his wife, the noble Alice de Courtenay, who was descended from the royal blood of France, were about to pay their homage, in connection with the other Aquitanian nobles.

When Count Aymer entered the grand hall where the sovereign held court the beautiful fiancee of Hugh de Lusignan accompanied him. It was a moment fraught with momentous interest to her, to her betrothed and to the sovereign himself; for, as the

beautiful vision approached the temporary throne and bowed her knee before him, all the mad passions of King John arose in unbridled power. Never had such loveliness dawned upon his sight in his own cold English clime.

Isabella was just in the first blush of womanhood—that age when Time goes smiling by with diamonds in his glass. Devotedly attached to the Count de Lusignan, her heart had never whispered of any higher ambition than to become his wife; and even now, surrounded by the pomp and glitter of the scene, her only longing was to return to his home, where she had already passed so many happy days.

King John was now thirty-two years of age; the husband of another—for he had wedded his distant cousin, Avisa, granddaughter of Robert, Earl of Gloucester. The pope had, it was true, dissolved this marriage, but the remembrance of the wife he had loved once should have kept him from an unholy alliance with another—unholy, because through it more than one heart was broken.

Dazzled by the prospect of his daughter's elevation to a throne, Count Aymer basely broke faith with Count de Lusignan, plunging him into the deepest woe. In his rage and sorrow, the latter challenged the king, but John refused to enter the lists with him.

In August, 1200, the marriage took place, and the royal pair sailed for England. Isabella was acknowledged as queen consort and crowned on the eighth day of October, by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The mother of King John, Eleanora of Aquitaine, inhabited the Castle of Mirabel, in Poitou, and was quietly discharging the government of that province. Hugh de Lusignan was conspiring with young Arthur Plantagenet to invade her dominions, hoping to capture the aged queen and exchange her only for his lost love, Isabella.

John heard of this daring assault and hastened to his mother's aid. For once he proved himself worthy of his race, and succeeded in protecting his mother and defeating his enemies. Recreant and unworthy as he had been, this act of bravery in some measure redeemed his character; although his insulting and brutal treatment of De Lusignan and Arthur obliterated even that sudden burst of courage; and when, in 1202, the young and noble Arthur was literally murdered by him who should have protected his rights, the seal of iniquity was set forever upon the recreant John.

In consequence of the seizure of Poitou by Philip Augustus, John was obliged to seek the alliance of De Lusignan. He had long since restored him to liberty. Hugh made his own terms of alliance; and the price was the betrothal to him of the young daughter of his lost Isabella, then only seven years old. To this John gave full consent. The infant princess was even delivered to him to be brought up in his castle, as Isabella had been, thus separating the young Joanna from her brothers entirely. His Aquitaine dominions being thus restored, John went back to England.

The earth was soon after relieved of that burden of guilt and shame which John of England had laid upon it in his own person. His son, Henry III., was crowned king, and Isabella retired to Angouleme. Joanna was at the Castle of Valence, in process of her education as Lusignan's wife, so near her mother as to be often with her.

It was three years after the death of King John. The youthful widow retained the wondrous beauty that had captivated the heart of Hugh de Lusignan. Nineteen years he had lived single for her sake, and now she looked even lovelier than ever. All the angelic sweetness and beauty of the child whom he was training to be his wife were nothing in comparison with the maturer fascinations of the mother, and Hugh bowed once more at the shrine of his early love, and was not refused. They were married in 1220, "without consulting her son or his council," according to the account of Matthew Paris, thereby incurring the displeasure of Henry.

He demanded the restoration of his sister Joanna to England, at the same time depriving his mother of her dowry. Joanna was married to Alexander II. when only eleven years of age. She is spoken of as an incarnation of goodness and loveliness. Weary years followed—strife and heart-burnings, wars and defeats, dispossession of territory of both husband and wife, until after the lapse of twenty-four years.

In the Abbey of Fontevrand, in "the secret chamber," Isabella of Angouleme had time to look back upon her life of unrest. Much wrong had she suffered and much had she occasioned. Her own and her husband's name had become attainted with suspicions, and their fair five children suffered with

them. From her other children she had become alienated, and the beautiful Joanna, from whom she had won her affianced husband, had died in 1236, a prey to consumption. Reports had been industriously circulated against Isabella, and one horrid suspicion had been bruited abroad—that she had attempted to poison the good King Louis, to whom she had fled for shelter with her family, and who had kindly received them all.

Whether conscience preyed upon her, or pride and ambition had eaten into her soul, she seemed to have no refuge but the sanctuary for her person, no rest for the weary heart but that secret chamber of Fontevrand. In this she remained, while her husband and son were refused even the miserable consolation of fighting to defend her fame. Here she took the veil, and from that chamber she never came forth, until she was brought forth to be placed in a lonely grave in the common cemetery of Fontevrand. "Thus passeth worldly glory."

WHAT SHE DID.

MANY stories are told of the women of that early generation who first broke ground in the forests of Pennsylvania and Virginia. They were in constant peril from wild beasts and from hostile Indians, but with heroic patience endured hardship, labor and disease. An example of another kind of courage is preserved by the descendants of Christiana Dickinson, the wife of one of the first settlers of Erie country, Pa.

She was a small low-voiced woman, extremely timid by nature, but upon one subject she was resolute; she had a horror of drunkenness. She lived in the days when the use of liquor was universal. Whisky was as commom a drink as water among these hardy, hard-working pioneers.

A temperance or abstinence society was unheard of. But when her sons were born, she resolved as far as she could to put a stop to whisky drinking in her home.

Her husband being absent from home, her brothers called for the help of the neighbors according to the custom of the time, to put up a barn needed on the farm. They all assembled and went to work, while she prepared a great dinner. After an hour or two whisky was asked for. One of her brothers came to the house for it; she refused to make her friends drunk. Her other brother, and at last an elder in the church came to reason with her; to tell her she would be accused of meanness. Without a word the little woman went out to the barn, and baring her head stepped upon a log, and spoke to them in a flattering voice. "My neighbors," said she, "this is a strange thing. Three of you are my brothers, three of you are elders in the church, all of you are my friends. I have perpared for you the best dinner in my power. If you refuse to raise the barn without liquor, so be it. But before I will provide whisky to give you, these timbers shall rot where they lie." The men angrily left the work and went home; the little woman returned to the house, and for hours cried as though her heart would break. But the next day every man came back, went heartily to work, enjoyed her good dinner, and said not a word about whisky.

Afterwards whisky at barn raisings was discontinued in the country. Her sons grew up strong vigorous men, who did good work in helping to civilize and christianize the world; their descendants are all of high type of intellectual and moral men and women. If she had yielded this little point they might have degenerated, like many of their neighbors, into drunkards and spendthrifts. There are still vice and malignant customs to be conquered, and for the work we need women of high souls and gentle spirits like Christiana Dickinson.

OUR YOUNG FOLKS' STORY-TELLER.

A USEFUL PET.

BY ROBERT E. TENER.

"WELL, well, I declare, boys, your pets will be the death of me yet!" exclaimed Aunt Eliza Fleetwood, as Joe and Jack rushed in one Saturday afternoon, carrying an enormous draggled Shanghai rooster. "Just look at that creature's legs! He must be six years old, at least. See the immense spurs he has, and all his feathers —what few there are—seem set on wrong end foremost. What in the world will you do with him? He is enough to frighten our Leghorns from ever laying another egg."

Joe and Jack, bold, rosy, and nearly of an age, the only children and perpetual plagues of the family, stood abash a moment. Then Joe said:—

"Well, auntie, look how big he is. We're going to fatten him up for Christmas, and won't he hold lots of stuffing?"

"Why, Joe, you might as well try to fatten a piece of leather. If that fowl were roasted, no one could ever eat him, unless with teeth like wolves'. Where did you get him?"

"We husked a lot of corn this forenoon for Farmer Scott, and he gave us the rooster in payment. He praised him up, and said he called him Old Rawhide, because he beat all the other roosters."

"Or because he is terribly tough," added their aunt.

"You ought to hear him crow, though, auntie," said Jack, enthusiastically. "You bet he can make music."

"I don't care much to hear his performance, Jack; and I don't want to hear you say 'you bet' again, either. It sounds as ugly as your new pet looks. Take him to the poultry yard; we can't keep him here."

The boys disappeared with their much abused prize, a little crest-fallen, and Aunt Eliza thought to herself:—

"If I could only get those boys to think of something that would stop this pet nuisance. Something that it would take them some time to accomplish, and give us a little peace meanwhile. Ah, I have it! I shall put a pet in their heads that will not be got easily, and yet the thought of which will make them discontented with nearer conquests. Now, boys," she added aloud, as our heroes returned, "why can't you get some useful pet, if pets you must have? In the course of a month you have brought home a big cat that lies before the fire or in the sun all day, and a dog that does nothing but eat or worry the cat, and a big bull-frog that you made a mud-puddle for in the yard, besides a poor little bird that died in its cage, and now this great, gawky, tough old rooster. How many other 'live things,' as you call them, you have had, from rabbits in the yard to guinea-pigs in the cellar, and white mice in the parlor, and not one of the least use. Now, if you got a nice horse, or a good cow, how different that would be. You could ride, or we could all have nice fresh milk and"——

Here she was interrupted by a prolonged, unearthly cry, that rose in volume like the notes of a fog-whistle, and then died away in a whisper.

"That's Rawhide crowing, auntie," said Jack, with pride. "Don't he go it? He's a"——

But here Jack was interrupted in his turn by a fearful commotion among the poultry, which sent both boys flying to the yard.

They found the big Shanghai strutting back and forth alone, while all the Leghorns were crouched in one corner, as far from him as they could possibly get. The former pride and glory of the yard, a fine young rooster, white as snow, slunk behind the rest, his proud tail drooped, and his plumage spattered with blood, which still flowed from his comb and wattles. Their aunt had followed the boys, and now by her direction they entered the yard, and after a prodigious scramble and cackling, succeeded in catching the new-comer and placing him in a box by himself.

"Now, boys, for pity's sake, do get something useful next time," was Aunt Eliza's parting speech as she returned to the house.

Joe and Jack were good boys. They never slurred their studies nor shirked their chores; but in the time they had to themselves, especially Saturdays, it was marvel-

ous the amount of mischief they could compass. Their mother, a widow, was a milliner, and from home all day long, and on her sister, the boys' Aunt Eliza, fell the burden of the housework. The boys both helped and hindered her. None so ready as they to provide her with shavings and kindlings, or to carry in coal on freezing days; but then she could never tell when they would be covering the table with paste making a kite, or opening the stove in the middle of her baking, to heat irons to bend for a new sled. But she thought these small evils compared to their passion for pets, which seemed to be growing most alarmingly, spite of the many efforts to check it.

She felt, however, that she had reason to congratulate herself on the success of her subtile plan when, for nearly a whole month after the Shanghai arrived, no new pets made their appearance. The boys seemed, indeed, to have lost all their former fondness for pets, and even begged a quickly granted permission to dispose of some already on their hands. The white mice were given to a boy friend who had broken his leg, and who, though slowly recovering, was very weary of his long confinement. The dog met a similar fate, but the cat refused to be parted with, always returning to her snug quarters by the stove. Jack even took Rawhide, whose crow was still his delight, and sold him. Neither boy had any reason to give for these proceedings, except that the "live things" took so much time and attention. Time seemed invaluable to the boys. They learned their lessons and did their chores in the fewest moments possible, and then disappeared for hours together. They were as precious of their pocket-money, also, as of their spare moments, and every cent was treasured. Aunt Eliza paid little attention to their proceedings, knowing she could trust them, and heartily glad to bid good-by to some, at least, of the pets.

But Joe and Jack were like the Indians. Permanent peace with them on the frontier was impossible. They were working out a grand scheme, and everything was going to their satisfaction.

It was Saturday again, and though well into November, the day was bright and pleasant, and the kitchen door stood wide open. Aunt Eliza was within, placidly rolling pie-crust, intent on the usual supplies for the morrow, but still sparing a thought now and then for "those boys," who had lately been high in her favor. She was just congratulating herself on the industrious and thrifty habits they had developed so suddenly, and on the almost total extinction of the race of pets, when two broad, rosy faces appeared at the door, and Joe exclaimed eagerly:—

"Auntie, we've got the horse!"

"What horse, child alive?" cried the startled housekeeper, looking up with sudden foreboding.

"Why, auntie," explained Jack, "you know you told us that a horse would be a real useful pet, and so we got one."

"You got a horse!" gasped their aunt. "Well, I never! Well, I declare!"

"Come and see him, auntie, do, please," pleaded the boys. And auntie, in a dazed state, allowed herself to be led out on the porch.

The "useful pet" stood before her in the yard. He was not tired, and, indeed, did not seem disposed to run away. He was standing in an attitude, which, even to her inexperienced eyes, looked odd, for one side of his back was up in a sharp angle, while the other sloped down like a roof of a house.

"Oh, that's nothing," said Joe, when she mentioned this fact. "He favors that off hind-foot a little, you know."

Aunt didn't know, but what could she answer to such a display of technical terms? She soon found she could never hope to emulate her nephews' knowledge about horses. One would have thought they had been borne in a stable, so freely did the terms descriptive of their pet's points roll from their eager tongues. Alas! the only points they could make her see were those of his bony frame, which stuck out conspicuously, apparently covered with little except his mangy skin. One of his eyes was covered with the white opacity of a cataract. The other seemed to be suffering from some kind of inflammation which kept the lids swollen and half-closed. He hung his head as though he lacked strength or energy to raise it, and when Jack led him a few paces, he did, indeed, "favor the off hind-leg" most alarmingly.

Aunt Eliza had by this time recovered her usual composure.

"Tell me all about it," said she, with a calmness born of despair. "How did you contrive to get that animal?"

"Well, auntie, when you advised us to get a horse" (auntie winced), "we thought it a

splendid idea, and we didn't seem to care for our other live things once we thought of that. We thought it would take a lot of money though, so we got all the little jobs we could find. There are lots of people getting in their winter coal now, and we shoveled it into the cellar for three or four families, and we gathered sacks of shavings and kindlings at the carpenter's shops and sold them; but for all we worked so hard, we only got three dollars altogether. When we went around to the livery stables all the men laughed at us, and wouldn't even tell us the price of their horses, but asked us if we didn't want to buy a carriage too. One day we went out to Farmer Scott's to get him to pay us for that husking job, for he owed us something besides Rawhide. Maybe he had heard that we wanted a horse. Anyway, he told us that he would give us a dollar, or if we chose we might have this horse instead. He said he was a good, quiet, family horse, but as winter was coming on, he hadn't much use for him, and so would let us have him. So, auntie," concluded Joe, triumphantly, "we got the horse and kept our three dollars, too."

"What do you call your charger?" said Aunt Eliza, glancing again at that remarkably cheap quadruped.

"Mr. Scott said his name was Whalebone," replied Jack, "'cause he was tough and strong."

"Like the rooster," rejoined Aunt Eliza. "Mr. Scott seems to have a genius for name-giving. Now, boys, did it ever strike you that a horse needs some little things, such as a stable, food, and proper attendance? How do you propose to care for this new pet? He'll eat a good deal more than the white mice."

"But he'll be so useful, aunt," urged Jack, earnestly.

Aunt Eliza was beginning by this time to feel rather sensitive on the useful aspect of the pet question, and thinking she detected a slight trace of irony in Jack's tone, looked at him sharply. But no, he was quite sincere, and began to enumerate the many services Whalebone could render the household, evidently thinking them well worthy so small a return as mere board and lodging.

His aunt hastened to dispel this pleasing notion.

"No, no, Jack," said she. "We don't need a horse, useful as that noble animal may be in the abstract. Joe and you got him on your own responsibility, and now you must either see to him properly yourselves or dispose of him. Now I must return to my work, and you had better manage to get a shelter for your pet, as night will soon come on. You know the one point I always insist upon about your 'live things' is that they shall not suffer while under your care."

Poor Joe and Jack! Their flash of triumph had departed. As their aunt disappeared into the house, and their glances again sought their new pet, the fond pride of a few moments before had died out of their eyes. They viewed him half in despair. That huge bulk, which now seemed the size of an elephant, how were they to house and feed it? After scratching their heads a while, and consulting together, they at last led their prize by the bit of rope round his neck which constituted his halter, to a near neighbor, Mr. Jones, who had a large barn and kept several horses of his own. Joe timidly asked permission to leave Whalebone with him for a week's time, promising to pay him whatever he might charge, even to the extent of their cherished three dollars.

Mr. Jones soon drew the whole story from them, and laughed heartily at it. He then told them that Whalebone was welcome to hay and stall for the next week, without charge, but that he could not keep him longer. The boys thanking him most warmly, returned slowly home.

The days sped on, and the boys were nearly at their wit's end when they thought of the time approaching at the end of the week when they would be compelled to take care of their big pet. They often went to gaze at him as he contentedly munched his hay in Mr. Jones' barn, and were filled with dismay at the quantity he consumed. Before the week was out he had quite improved in appearance, however, for Mr. Jones was a kind man, and pitied the poor brute, which he saw had been badly treated, because regarded as worthless by his former owner. He, therefore, took care that Whalebone had plenty of hay and grain, and he bathed his sore eye and poulticed his foot, till both were nearly well. He advised the boys not to ride him nor make any use of him for a while, till he "perked up a bit," as he expressed it. To this they readily agreed, as they had no spare time anyway, being engrossed with their preparations. They had expended their cherished three dollars in

buying a lot of old boards, and were now, with Aunt Eliza's consent, erecting a small, rough stable in the yard. By Saturday night they had it completed and Whalebone in it, supplied with a few days' food by the generosity of Mr. Jones. The boys felt proud, in the midst of their anxiety, when they went in the morning to their own stable to attend to their own horse. There was a light fall of snow on the ground, the first of the season, and they thought Whalebone looked very comfortable in his new quarters, sheltered from the frosty wind. But how he did eat! By the middle of the week he would be quite without rations. But the boys lit on a plan by which they managed to feed him.

They had made the acquaintance of several hostlers in the livery stables when searching for a horse to buy, and now they made a bargain with one of these men, agreeing to come early in the morning and again in the evening, to work for him, in payment for which he allowed them to carry away what hay they could hold in their arms. By this means Whalebone got enough to eat, but the boys were worked so hard that their mother wished to interfere, and only the strong remonstrance of their aunt prevented her doing so. Aunt Eliza had begun to take a very lively interest in the new pet, and wished to see how the boys would manage left to themselves. Besides, she urged they were learning a valuable lesson that would be of good service to them, and which it would be a great pity to spoil. So Whalebone continued to tranquilly munch his hay while his young masters toiled for him.

But when the winter was well begun, and only two weeks remained to Christmas, Joe and Jack met with a misfortune. The owner of the livery stable where they worked happened to see them leaving with their bundles of hay. Now the owner was no party to the hostler's little plan for lightening the latter's labors, and when he learned it from the boys he went into a great passion, and calling the man before him at once dismissed him, telling the boys they need return no more. What could they do now? They tried to make a similar arrangement with other stablemen, but tried in vain. They were reduced to following hay wagons and gathering any of the load that fell, and sometimes, I fear, when Whalebone was on the verge of starvation, they did not always wait for it to fall, but pulled armfuls off the end of the load. Mother gave aunt notice that she could stand it no longer.

"Eliza," said she, "my poor boys are killing themselves for the brute. I shall give him away."

"He is the boys' property, Jane; you must pay for him if you take him. Let him be a few days; they have not asked for help, and maybe they have some plan of their own. I am sure they cannot like having neither time nor money just at Christmas."

"Well, Eliza," replied the mother, "I shall wait till the day after Christmas, and then that brute shall go, if I have to pitch him into the river myself."

Truly Christmas was coming,—none knew that better than Joe and Jack, but they had small hope of enjoying it by means of any savings of their own. All their capital was sunk in Whalebone. They were even in debt on his account to a good-natured freedman, who had let them have a bale of hay on their promise of prompt payment just after Christmas. To meet their debt they depended on two things. One was, a possible present of a dollar or so from aunt or mother; the other, old Jacobs, the ragman. For a long time Joe and Jack had been allowed to gather all the waste paper, bottles, rags, old iron, and so forth, of the household, and dispose of them for their own private benefit. A queer old fellow, driving an old horse in an older cart, called every few months to buy such things, and his cry of "A bac full of rax," brought out all the ragbags in the neighborhood. The boys expected to see him the very day before Christmas. He did not fail, and Joe and Jack joyfully responded to his call. They had a more than usually large supply of things for him, and were delighted to see the handful of dimes and cents they received in return. His business concluded with the boys he passed on to the next house, but before he reached it his old horse slipped on the ice-covered cobbles and fell heavily. A crowd soon formed, but by no efforts could they induce the horse to rise, and they soon found that the poor creature's leg was broken. Its owner's lamentations filled the air, and Joe and Jack felt very sorry for the poor, ragged old man, and looked on full of sympathy. Jack's face suddenly lighted up with a grand idea.

"Let's give him Whalebone!" he cried.

"Hurrah!" cried Joe, "let's give him Whalebone."

To perform a generous action, and to relieve one's self of a terrible load of anxiety at the same time—this double joy animated the boys as they ran eagerly after the rag-man.

Just as they came up a police officer had put an end to the sufferings of the disabled horse by shooting him, and he lay a lifeless mass, waiting to be hauled away. His master was slowly and sadly removing the patched harness from his body.

"Mr. Jacobs," said Joe, "I am so sorry you have lost your horse."

"So bees I, my poy, he vas von good pony," replied old Jacobs.

"Well, my brother and I have a horse that we will give you. He is a better one than yours was," added Joe.

"You gifs me von horse?" said Jacobs quite surprised.

"Certainly, for a Christmas present," said Jack. "Come and see him."

Old Jacobs followed in mute wonder to Whalebone's stable. He looked at him carefully, without saying a word. Thanks to good care, Whalebone's eye was quite well, and his lame leg also, while his skin was sleek and full. Farmer Scott would have been surprised had he seen how well his worthless horse looked.

"You gifs that horse to me?" said Mr. Jacobs, his inspection ended. "No, no, my poys, I bees not so boor as dat, but I bays fife tollars for him if you likes."

Five dollars! the boys jumped at the offer. Five minutes later Whalebone was driven off, harnessed to the ragman's wagon, and Joe and Jack stood in the empty stable the happy possessors of five dollars' worth of small coins, and scarcely less happy in the thought that the insatiable monster for which they had toiled had departed never to return. They broke wildly into the kitchen.

"O auntie! auntie!" cried Joe, "we've sold Whalebone for five dollars."

"Well, you boys never were matched! To think of making a profit out of that horse." Aunt's emphasis on "that" was not complimentary to poor Whalebone.

"Yes, we did, auntie, but we don't want another horse," said Jack. And he added gravely, "A useful pet is only useful when you have a use for him."

Aunt laughed, but she felt there was a deal of wisdom in Jack's observation, and indeed it became a proverb in the family thenceforth, always quoted when any one was too anxious to indulge a foolish fancy.

A WHITE-FACED BEAR.

BY KIT CARSON, JR.

IT was a warm July evening. We were lying on the grass under the great Balm-o'-Gilead tree, Will and I, watching the bats as they flitted about. Grandfather had brought out his chair, and was enjoying it with us. Old Hughy Watson, the hunter, had come back the day before from one of his trips up about the lakes. Tom had been down to hear some of his stories.

"Well, Tom," said grandfather, "what's the good word with old Hughy?"

"Oh, he had lots to tell," said Tom. "He says he saw a white-faced bear."

"A white-faced bear!" exclaimed Will. "I have heard of white bears, but I never heard of a white-faced black bear before. I guess the old fellow was a little scared or a little sprung when he saw his white-faced bear."

"I know," said grandfather, laughing, "that there is no such thing down in the books, as they say. And I well remeber the time I got laughed at for seeing one, when I was a boy."

"You never told us of that, grandfather," said Tom.

"Haven't I? Well, I will, then. 'Twas the first year we were up here. The country was all new then. My father, that's your great grandfather, came in the fall before and bought this place of one John Clives, who had made a clearing here two years before. Old John had got up a frame house—twenty by thirty—a very comfortable one in those days. You can see where the old cellar used to be out there. The Watson farm wasn't cleared up then. The only neighbor within three miles was Jefferson Edwards,

who had begun over there where the Edwardses live now. There were about twenty acres in our clearing, all covered with stumps and stubs—they've rotted away since. Father felled ten acres more in the fall after he bought. It was along there under the mountain, what we now call the south field. And when we came in the spring that was about our first work, cutting and piling that, to get it ready to burn. My brother William, the one you was named after, Will, and my brother Ezekiel were both older than I. We used to take out stints, to cut and pile so much each day. It was very hot and dry that spring, and when we burned it off the fire got into the woods and raged for a week. But wood was of little account then. After burning it we planted it to corn."

"Did you plant it all to corn?" asked Will.

"Yes, but we didn't have to prepare the ground as they do now. It was rich enough of itself to bear anything then. We didn't plough it; just went along, dropped the corn and scraped a handful of dirt over it, that was enough. There were no weeds either. All the care it needed was to go about with a bush-hook and cut up the sprouts about the stumps. I say all the care—I mean by that all the hoeing, for it did need a good deal of care in one sense. It seemed as if every sort of bird and beast had a claim on it. In the spring the crows and squirrels dug up the seed almost as fast as we could plant it. We had to put some of it in the third time. But it came on after a while, and grew wonderfully. I've never seen such corn since. As soon as it was in the 'milk' another struggle began for the corn. A perfect army of squirrels came into it. It did no good to shoot them; there were too many for that. Father used to keep Zeke and me down there, walking back and forth along the log fence with an old bell and a tin pan, drumming and ringing to keep them out. The fence was alive with 'chipmunks' and red squirrels, running with their mouths full of corn. The gray squirrels carried a whole ear at once, but they were shy and not as plenty. Then there was another larger squirrel, nearly as large as a cat. They had beautiful bushy tails, black as jet. Blue jays and flocks of blackbirds were continually lighting down. It didn't take them long to swallow a bushel. These were the enemies by day; but the night turned out a worse tribe. A parcel of raccoons, from the great ledge up there, used to come down every night to feast upon the soft corn.

"We could always tell them by their curious tracks. It looked just like a little child's bare foot. We caught several in traps, cunning-visaged fellows. They are of a gray color, and nearly as large as a fox.

"It was now about the middle of September, and the corn had got nearly ripe enough to cut up, when, one morning as we went into the field to begin our music, we came upon a large track, and saw all around where the corn had been crushed down and eaten. In some spots it was all flat for rods. We had thought the coons bad enough; but what they had done was nothing compared to the wholesale work of the past night. These tracks were as long as those made by a large shoe, and much broader. They were trodden deeply too, and had the print of large toes.

"'The bears have been in it,' said Zeke; 'but I never knew they made such tracks as those. What a tremendous fellow this must have been!'

"There were smaller ones of the same sort in other parts of the field. Three bears of different size had been there during the night. One, rather small, had gone along breaking down the stalks and eating the ears. Another, larger, had sat between the rows and pulled the corn to him on both sides. But the third, the one that made the big track, had walked along like a horse, biting out an ear here and there at a mouthful, leaving the husks stripped down. It looked as if he had 'been getting roasting ears,' Zeke said. On hearing our story at noon, father went down. Edwards happened to be over, and went down with us. They both stared at the sight of the big track.

"'That was an old racer,' said Edwards; 'one of the tall long-legged sort.'

"The others, they said, were small bears; such as they used to call 'hogbacks.'

"'You'd better watch to-night,' said Edwards. 'Perhaps you'll get a shot at some of them. Though I declare,' said he, examining the track, 'I shouldn't care about facing that one. You'd find him as tall as a colt, and I shouldn't wonder if he would weigh six or seven hundred pounds. They'll outrun a horse. Powerful animal. I saw one once.'

"But we didn't watch that night. We were all pretty tired, and father said we would wait one night and see. And the next

morning we did see—worse damage than the night before.

"'Something must be done, boys,' said father. 'Never saw such work.'

"The corn was broken down in every direction.

"'We'll watch to-night, Jed. You and Zeke wash out the guns. See that the flints are in right. And you run some bullets, William.'

"We had three guns. One was an old United States piece, with large gripes along the barrel. The second was what they called a French gun—one of those taken from the French when the New England folks took Louisburg. The third was mine, a little shot-gun, good for squirrels a rod or two off.

"Soon after dark we went down to the field. We didn't expect the bears before ten or eleven o'clock, but we meant to be before them. The field was narrow and very long—nearly half a mile. The bears had been in at both ends. So father was to take his place at the further end with the old United States piece; Will the upper end with his French gun, while I was to go midway, in the safest place, they said. There was no gun for Zeke, so he armed himself with a pitchfork and stood by Will. In this way we were over fifty rods apart.

"'Here, Jed,' said father, as we came near the middle of the piece, 'here's a good place for you. Sit down here behind this clump of basswood sprouts; I don't much think they will come in here, but sit still and watch. Don't fire unless you see a bear.'

"Then he went on, leaving me to watch and listen. An hour passed—a pretty long one. All was still as the grave. But I had a nice snug place among the green basswood. The leaves were thick and large as dinner-plates. I was expecting every minute to hear the guns of father or Will. All at once I heard something behind me in the corn; but it was father coming along to see if we were all right, and pretty soon he went back to his place.

Another hour went by. The moon had now risen, but it was a little hazy and the light was rather dim. Several owls were hooting off in the woods, and now and then I could hear the long, long shriek of a 'lucivee,' wandering about in search of his supper. I began to get rather lonesome. Suddenly there was a crack in the brush below me in the woods, as if a large stick had broken. I crouched, listening intently, and presently heard a loud woosh!—a sort of snort, as you've heard a horse after runing in a frolic; and soon the brush cracked again, nearer this time. I knew some heavy animal was coming. I was scared enough, but they had laughed at me so much I resolved not to run until I had a chance to fire. The cracking had stopped, and the same snorting noise was repeated, as if the bear had smelled me. I peered through the sprouts, with my gun cocked ready to fire. There stood a huge creature, not a rod off, with its head up, snuffing and looking into the bush.

"But could that be a bear? His face was as white as your white-faced calf, though the rest of his body looked black enough. He took a step towards me; I pulled the trigger and ran for dear life. I scarcely knew whether my gun had gone off or not, but I fancied I heard another snort behind me. I ran headlong through the corn toward the house.

"'Is that you, Jed?' cried a voice in front of me.

"It was Will and Zeke coming down at the sound of my gun. I stopped and gasped out my story. They didn't care to hurry down there; so we all stood waiting for some sign from the bear. Just then we heard father shout from the place where I had been, and then we went down.

"'Who fired?' asked he. 'Was it you, Jed?'

"'Yes, Jed fired and run,' said Will. 'He was making a bee-line for the house when we stopped him.'

"'I guess he didn't run any too soon,' said father. 'Look at those sprouts. See how they are broken down!'

"Sure enough, the clump in which I had been hidden was crushed flat, and the next day we saw large tracks about it, and there was a drop of blood on one of the leaves. So I could boast of hitting him. But where did he go so quick? Nobody had seen him but me; and my story of his white face found no favor with anybody. Father and the boys wouldn't believe a word of it; and Edwards laughed as if he would split when they told him.

"'Tell us anything but that, Jed,' said he, 'and we'll believe it; for you're a plucky little fellow to face him at all with such a gun as that.'

"The next night father shot one of the

hogbacks in the corn. The wicked little face of that one was black enough, and after that my white-faced bear became a worse joke than ever. So I said no more about it, though I was very far from believing that it was 'all moonshine,' as they told me.

"We got in our corn not long after that. There was a fine crop, though nearly everything had had a share in it.

"Well, winter passed, and the next spring we began to lose sheep. Hay had come out short, and we had turned the sheep out early. We used to find their pelts nicely rolled up out in the woods, and saw the same large tracks about that we had seen in the cornfield. Edwards was in the same fix, too.

"'It's a bear's work,' said he. 'Some old fellow has come out of his winter den with a good appetite for mutton. He'll have all of our sheep if we don't look out. I'll watch to-morrow, if you'll do the same next day.'

"We gladly agreed to that, and so the matter stood. Well, just at dusk the next night Mrs. Edwards saw a bear come among their flock which was feeding near the edge of the woods. He took a sheep and was off in a moment. She called Edwards who was in the barn. He caught up his gun, and they both ran after the bear into the forest, hoping to make him drop the sheep. It was quite dark in the woods, and as they ran on they suddenly saw the bear coming back to meet them. He had dropped the sheep, but not in the way they had expected. Edwards fired at him, but somehow in his hurry or fright, he missed him; he was always a nervous man. On came the bear, and they were now glad to run from him as fast as they had run after him. He chased them clean into their house. In the scrimmage Edwards had lost the flint out of his old gun, and couldn't use that. I suppose the bear did actually keep them in the rest of the night.

"'Twas a tremendous big fellow,' said Edwards, the next morning, when he told us; 'and, Jed,' said he, turning to me, as he went out, 'I shall have to own that he had a white face, or something very much like it.'

"The next day we lost another sheep, and it was then decided to give up work and hunt the bear down.

"'It's the only thing we can do now,' said Edwards. 'We've got to kill him, or he will us.'

"So the next day we started after him, five of us, with the two dogs. We soon found where he had eaten the sheep. There was the pelt laying just where he had taken it off; and towards nightfall we came up with him. He had turned upon the dogs, and sat facing them, as if he were very much surprised at their sauciness, for there was a look of great contempt on his broad white face—white enough now, as we all could see. He drew himself up, bear fashion, when he saw us, and stood his ground. We all cocked our guns.

"'You fire first, Edwards,' said father, 'and we will stand ready in case you don't kill him.'

"Edwards fired. The ball struck the old fellow in the shoulder, whirling him half round. But in an instant he recovered himself and came at us. Will and I blazed away with our buckshot; but he would certainly have hugged some of us if father had not made a saving shot just in the nick of time. He kept his fire till the bear was within ten feet, then gave him a ball from the old United States piece, straight through the breast. That dropped him.

"He was, as Edwards had said, a 'regular racer.' Though not very fat, he dressed off five hundred and thirty pounds. His legs seemed twice the length of the 'hogbacks' which we killed the fall before. But the most peculiar thing about him was his white face. It was as white as milk, and his muzzle had that clear pink color you often see in white-faced cattle. I always thought it was the one I saw in the cornfield. There were several little scars that looked like shot-marks on his nose. His being fired at so much, and missed or only slightly wounded, accounted for his boldness, and the fierceness with which he turned upon us. The fact that I did really see a white-faced bear was thus proved."

"But are there really two different species of the common black bear?" asked Tom.

"I don't know enough of zoology to answer that correctly, perhaps," said grandfather; "but I do know there was a great difference between what we called a 'hogback,' and a 'racer'."

HOME TOPICS.

SHARP KNIVES FOR THE KITCHEN.—The pathway of the average cook is seldom, if ever, rose strewn, and when necessity compels her to put up with the "make-shifts" of the ordinary kitchen, do not blame her too severely if the weeds of discontent spring up and gain a strong foothold. No workman, be he carpenter, joiner, mason or decorator, can do perfect, acceptable work without appropriate tools; neither can a cook work as fast or as well with inconveniences as she can in a properly appointed kitchen.

The one matter of paring knives is a matter of gigantic importance to the cook, with her many "irons in the fire," yet it is an exceptional case where a kitchen is found containing those necessities that are sufficiently sharp to pare with ease a turnip, an apple, or a potato. In the average American kitchen they are as "dull as a hoe," to use a common expression.

If you are the happy possessor of one or two of your grandmother's old tin case knives, hold on to them with a determined grip; "their price is above rubies." Much of the cutlery of the present day is so poor that it will not hold an edge. A good file polished down on a grindstone, with one end sharpened off to a point, is said to be far better than any manufacturer's knife—the steel being of so much better quality. A small whetstone should be its constant companion.—*Good Housekeeping.*

LAUNDRY LESSONS.—Put white clothes to soak over night in tubs of cold water with a tablespoonful of powdered borax in each tub.

Iron white clothes on the right side, but calicoes, ginghams, etc., on the wrong side, to produce the lustreless effect seen in the new material before it has been laundried.

White silk handkerchiefs must not be dampened, but pressed with a moderate iron when entirely dry.

Starch table linen slightly, bed linen not at all. Who does not recall the night she slipped all over a starched pillow?

Do not rub flannels on a board. The main thing is quick drying, and that they be washed and rinsed in water of the same temperature very quickly, and not allowed to cool between.

In making starch, boil it at least one hour, then add a teaspoonful of powdered borax to a half gallon of starch. Clothes done up in this starch will have a peculiar soft stiffness, and will not "muss" as soon as you put them on.

To take out fruit stains, have some one stretch the spot loosely over a large bowl, then pour boiling water through it from the teakettle; the stain will be removed at once.

Ink stain and iron mould must have a plaster of lemon juice and salt applied, and then be put in the sun.

Machine oil spots may be rubbed with soap and cold water.

Pongee silk is washed like a white muslin garment, except that it must not be boiled nor scalded. Let it get quite dry, and iron with a hot iron. If ironed while damp, it will either be spotted or darkened in color.

Fried food should not be prepared while ironing is going on in the same room. The odor of the fat is apt to cling to the clean clothes, and the smell of cold grease is always unpleasant.

PUDDING WORTH EATING.—There are rice rice puddings and rice puddings. The old-fashioned one, if made in the right way, is not to be "sneezed at." The following one is vouched for by Mrs. Rorer, principal of the Philadelphia cooking-school. Add two heaping tablespoonfuls of washed rice, same quantity of sugar, a quarter of a grated nutmeg, and a half cup of raisins to a quart of new milk; place it in a moderate oven and cook slowly for about two hours, stirring every fifteen minutes for the first hour and a half; the last half hour the oven should be sufficiently hot to form a thin, papery crust of a deep brown shade on the top; the pudding when done should be creamy, not solid.

CHOCOLATE PUDDING.—Rub two tablespoonfuls of butter to a cream, add two tablespoonfuls of flour, and pour on slowly one and one-half cupfuls of hot milk; melt three ounces of grated chocolate with three tablespoonfuls of sugar and three tablespoonfuls of hot water; put the first mixture on to boil in a double boiler, add the chocolate, and cook eight minutes; remove from the fire, add the beaten yolks of five eggs, and set away to cool; about half an hour before serving, add the well beaten whites, and bake in a buttered dish about half an hour. Serve with one cup of cream sweetened with two tablespoonfuls of powdered sugar and beaten until thick with the Dover beater. The butter should be measured as rounding as the spoon hollows; cream with a wooden spoon in a bowl that has been slightly heated. The whites of the eggs should be kept in a cool place until ready to use, as they will beat up much lighter and stiffer if cool. This is a very nice dessert, if the chocolate flavor is liked.

A resident family physician—a bottle of N. K. Brown's Ess. Jamaica Ginger in the house. "N. K's."

CURIOUS AND OTHER MATTERS.

COURT OF CROWS.—I never would have believed stories told about crow justice had I not attended their "court," says Ewing Herbert, in the Kansas City *Star*. One beautiful day in December I was riding on the public road two miles north of Hamlin, Kan. I had noticed great flocks of crows flying about me, and when nearing a cottonwood grove, in making a turn to the right, I saw hundreds of them perched in the trees in solid lines to the end of the rows. I had read somewhere that crows were well-governed birds, and when I saw this fine-looking body I judged that it sat there to give trial to an offender of some sort. I stopped my horse, half fearing the crafty birds would fly—adjourn court or continue the case. To my delight no attention was paid to me—it takes a man with a gun to disturb these mocking, impudent blacklegs. I was just in time to hear and see all that was done.

From a tree at the head of a row, where ten crows sat, there came such loud and rapid cawing as I never heard before from so few throats, and every now and then all the flock joined in making the noise, and the chorus thus furnished was all that could have been asked if noise were desired. After two or three minutes of this racket a silent rest was taken, which was broken by a single crow, who made a little talk in the crow dialect, followed quickly by others.

Things became more dignified, and my interest in the proceedidgs was so intense that when a fine, fat bird submitted a few remarks and was applauded by general cawing from every bird present, I could scarcely keep from clapping my hands.

Suddenly twelve crows flew down the line twice and back, and all was still as they did so. I was amused and startled. This might be a jury of crows on parade; and I believe it was. After two or three crows had again spoken the twelve flew down the line once more; but this time there were fierce caws from every crow in answer to caws from the twelve. My fancy explained: The jury was seeking its verdict in public opinion, and the excited crows, like revolutionary mobs, demanded blood. Back to their perches for the last time flew the crows, and again a silence fell not unlike the abrupt hush of courtroom whispers as the prisoner steps forward to learn the worst. But I could distinguish no criminal. As I looked for the poor fellow there was a great angry caw from every crow and all flew to the center of the line, where, as I live, they tore three of their unsuspecting kind in shreds, leaving only a few feathers to float upward and out of sight as they separated and noiselessly flew away, seemingly satisfied with what they had done.

THE ANTIQUITY OF THE SLOT DEVICE.—There was a coin-in-the-slot machine in Alexandria, Egypt, a couple of thousand years or so ago. It was invented by a priest, and dispensed holy water automatically. A coin dropped through the hole tilted the nicely balanced lever and a spoonful of the liquid ran out into the palm of the hand. The slot idea is as old as the Christian era.

But what has puzzled inventors has been such an application of it as could not be beaten by bad boys. The earlier slot machines could be worked by buttons, by iron washers, by coins with strings attached, and by iron rods. In one way and another the contents were pumped out and the owner of the machine and the merchandise was none the richer. About four years ago the inventors, by zigzag tubes or by careful adjustment of weight, or by some other contrivance, succeeded in getting slot machines which could not be deceived by youthful ingenuity.

Since then applications have poured in. Principal Examiner Aughinbaugh says that the patents on slot machines now number in the hundreds. There are seven different patents for slot machines for taking photographs. In England a patent has been granted for a machine which automatically weighs a person and announces the result audibly by a phonograph arrangement.

The most profitable slot machines of this immediate period are the musical phonographs. They are so many mints to the owners. Music rolls are changed daily. The owners have gone so far as to hire the famous Marine Band to play many tunes for reproduction by the phonograph. An accomplished young lady performer is kept regularly employed in Washington at a salary of eighteen dollars per week to play all the latest music to the phonograph.—*Globe-Democrat.*

FORTUNATE PATENTEES.—Mr. Munn of the *Scientific American* tells many interesting stories about patents and inventors. He says the gimlet-pointed screw has brought more wealth to different men than many silver and gold mines of the West. A man named Walter Aitken was the first to think of it, and he realized a handsome fortune. Aitken's father, by the way, invented a sawset which brought him $100,000 or more.

It was a Yankee who first thought of putting copper tips on children's shoes, and his check became good for magnificent sums.

Sometimes many years elapse before the good qualities of an invention are appreciated. The patent on roller skates had nearly expired before it realized any profit. Then somebody started a

rink, and so made the skate inventor worth $1,000,000.

Who has not seen the "Dancing Jim Crow"? Who would believe that it was worth $75,000 a year to its inventor? Yet it is true.

One of the largest fortunes ever realized from a patent was made by the man who conceived the idea of putting emery powder on cloth, and the inverted glass bell to hang over gas-burners proved to be a veritable lamp of Aladdin.

The rubber tip for lead pencils made $100,000. The pen for shading with different colors brings an annual stipend of $200,000; and in the year 1887 alone, as proved by testimony in recent legal action, the inventor of metal plates for the protection of the soles and heels of shoes realized a profit of $1,250,000.

THE ISTHMUS OF PANAMA.—More men have died and are buried on the Isthmus of Panama, along the line of the proposed canal, than on any equal amount of territory in the world.

It was in 1887, the year before the final collapse of the canal scheme came, that chance took me to "the Isthmus," as it is more usually described. How many people are buried out in Monkey Hill? Certainly 8,000 or 9,000; probably 12,000 or 15,000, but it's all a matter of guess work as to the exact number. But the ground about Aspinwall only holds a small percentage of the men who have died on the Isthmus. The city of Panama, of course, lays claim to the largest number of burials, but I can say without exaggeration that the entire line of the railroad and canal from the Atlantic to the Pacific is a continuous graveyard. At Matochin alone over 3,500 Chinamen met their death in one day. That was twenty-five or thirty-five years ago, while the Panama Railroad was being built, and long before work on the canal was begun. Ten thousand Chinamen had been brought from China to work on the Canal. Over one half of them were camped at what is now Matochin. Small-pox broke out among them, and the mortality became so great that the Chinamen, always easily excited, became panic stricken, and preferring to die by drowning, ran down the steep sides of the hills near their camp and threw themselves into the Chagres river. As I have said, 3,500 of them were drowned. It was because of this fact that the name of the camp was changed to Muertechino, muerte meaning dead, in Spanish, and chino signifying Chinamen. The name has since become perverted to Matochin. It is a common saying, believed by many on the isthmus, that every tie on the Panama Railroad represents a dead man.

TREASURE LYING IDLE IN INDIA.—It is estimated in the Allahabad *Pioneer* that the treasures lying idle in India in the shape of hoardes or ornaments amounts to $1,350,000,000. A competent authority guesses that "in Amritsar city alone there are jewels to the value of £2,000,000." As regards some other districts the figures that have been furnished are not less astonishing. The miserable waste of Montgomery is estimated to possess about 50 lakhs in ornaments. The hillsides and valleys of Kulu are put at 3 1-2 lakhs. In Jhelum two fifths of the wealth of the district is said to be vested in property of this nature, and in Kohat, "probably one of the poorest districts of the province in this respect, the estimate is taken at 800 rupees for each Hindoo family, and 10 rupees for each Mussulman family, and a lakh in the aggregate for the Nawab and other Raises, making a total for the district of 75 lakhs." A lakh is worth about $35,000.

FACTS THAT WILL INTEREST YOU.

The sun yields 8,000,000 times the light of the moon.

The word "its" occurs only once in the whole of the Bible.

There is no other fabric in the world that has such a history of its own, and such a part in the world's history, as linen.

Arthur Rothschild sold his famous collection of postage stamps for the sum of £12,000.

At the Los Angeles fair, one of the curiosities was a cucumber seven feet long. It was coiled like a serpent.

The queen is supplied with four dozen pairs of gloves per month, from a certain fund, and she insists on having them.

There are some 75,000 Icelanders still left in their native island, notwithstanding the fact that the emigration epidemic has been raging there for nearly twenty years.

The alligator builds a nest of mud and grass, and lays a large number of oblong, white eggs; but the little ones, when hatched, often serve as a lunch for their unnatural papa, and this cannabalism, more than the rifle, prevents their number from increasing.

Those ocean steam-vessels which pass through latitudes where there is much heat accompanied by smooth water are notable for the number of chairs with which their decks are covered. These chairs are usually the property of the passengers, and an experienced hand always takes care to be thus provided before the voyage begins.

It is said that a wealthy gentleman of Liverpool has purchased the garden of Gethsemane, near Jerusalem, in which the Saviour passed the night before his crucifixion. The purchase was made in order to prevent speculators from carrying out their scheme of building on the sacred grounds a hotel for the accommodation of visitors and tourists in the Holy Land.

RUTHVEN'S PUZZLE PAGE.

Send all communications for this Department to EDWIN R. BRIGGS, West Bethel, Oxford County, Maine.

Answers to June Puzzles.

90.—Benjamin Harrison.

91.—A S E P T I C
S E V E R S
E V E R Y
P E R T
T R Y
I S
C

92.—C A R
C A S E D
C A P I T A L
A S I N I N E
R E T I P E D
D A N E S
L E D

93.—Com(bin)e.

94.—Pal(pit)ate.

95.—An(chore)t.

96.—R(aim)ent.

97.—Ear(nest)ly.

98.—H O P P E T
R A I S E S
N E T T L E
R O T A T E
P E T T E D

99.—L E T H A L
E U R O P E
T R O U P E
H O U S E S
A P P E T E
R E A L T Y L E E S E D

100.—Tangle, Bangle, Dangle, Fangle, Jangle, Mangle.

101.—Solitude is the nurse of wisdom.

17.—*Double Letter Enigma.*

In "hottest" clime;
In "railroad" time;
In "lawyer's" plea;
In "rippling" sea;
In "beauty's" sleep;
In "dungeons" deep;
In "topmost" peak;
Two large fish seek.

IRISH FOREMAN.

Two Stars.

18.—1 A letter. 2 An abbreviation, denoting a certain piece of money. 3 A spotted fish living among rocks and stones. 4 Protruded. 5 In the position of a man making a thrust. 6 One who clambers up. 7 An endowed chapel where one or more priests daily sing or say mass for the the souls of the donors. 8 Right (Abbr.). 9 A letter.

19.—1 A letter. 2 Well. 3 A rosary of one hundred and fifty beads. 4 Oily. 5 A wreath. 6 One of a sect very strict. 7 To cut deeper. 8 English (Abbr.). 9 A letter.

ROLLIN G. STONE.

Anagrams.

20.—Die not curst.

21.—Curs can't mail it.

22.—Loud braves.

23.—Agile lance.

TRIANGLE.

24.—*Numerical Enigma.*

1, 2, 3, is to compress; 4, 5, 6, is an accomplice; 10, 9, 8, 7, is a metal pin; WHOLE is a mean wretch.

SHEENY JAKE.

Two Squares.

25.—1 Freely. 2 A ruler. 3 Transactions. 4 A hook for stretching cloth on a frame. 5 To watch. 6 Commences.

26.—1 The name of a cottage for ladies. 2 Dress. 3 A thread. 4 A male name. 5 An interstice or small space. 6 An Irish proper name.

VENUS.

Decapitations.

27.—Behead to rejoice, and leave burdened.

28.—To lose by gaming, and leave to pace.

29.—A head-piece, and leave a tree.

30.—Rightful, and leave frightful.

31.—A sharp noise, and leave to castigate.

32.—A kind of helmet, and leave a constellation.

W. H. R.

Curtailments.

33.—Curtail a maggot, and leave an old game at cards.

34.—A lobster of small size, and leave to fawn upon, as a dog.

35.—A bird of prey, and leave an enclosure.

36.—The French bean, and leave an appearance.

37.—To ramble, and leave a beam.

CYRIL DEANE.

Syncopations.

38.—Syncopate to continue, and leave to supply.

39.—Incrusted with sugar, and leave sincere.

40.—A kind of rustic saddle, and leave a face of hewn stone.

41.—Covetous, and leave wretchedness.

42.—A ring of iron or other metal, and leave to punish.

DINAH.

43.—*Word Deletion.*

Take the language of the ancient Romans from twisted silver wire, and leave a child's name for a parent.

F. S. F.

Answers in two Months.

Prizes for Solutions.

For the first complete or largest list of answers to this month's puzzles, received before August 10th, we offer an illustrated novelette; and for the next best list a small book of beautiful poems.

April Solvers.

Rollin G. Stone, E. G. D., English Boy, Ida May, Birdie Browne, D. E. Gerry, Nicholas, Ned Nason, Katie Smith, Teddy, Minnie Jones, Birdie Lane, A. Mary Khan, Annie Kirkpatrick, Vinnie, Ann Eliza and J. D. L.

Prize-Winners.

Nicholas, Chicago, Ill., for the largest list of correct answers; Teddy, New Haven, Conn., for the next best list.

EDITOR'S DRAWER.

THINGS PLEASANT AND OTHERWISE.

BECLOUDED.

My Grandfather Good, a pious old soul,
Who had stood for the truth all his life,
Loved the pipe that he smoked, I think, on the whole,
Almost as he did his dear wife.

One night, as he slept, he had a queer dream—
Experience quite frequent of late;
He thought that he died, crossed over the stream,
And stood by the "Beautiful Gate."

In reply to his knock, good St. Peter looked out,
And just a little, to try him,
He sternly demanded what the noise was about,
And made as if he should deny him.

"Good sir and kind friend," this disciple began,
"I've lived, in a world full of sin,
A true Christian life; I've loved God and man,
And I want very much to come in!"

"Please, what was your name," was St. Peter's retort,
"In the world wherein sinning is rife?"
"Jehoiakim Good, or Akim for short;
It's down in the Lamb's Book of Life."

The saint went away, but soon re-appeared,
And said that the name was not there;
He felt very sorry, but he very much feared
That he could not give heed to his prayer.

The old man replied: "It surely must be
Recorded in letters of gold;
For always I've fed on the fruit of the tree
Which stood where the crystal tide rolled."

"Very well," said the saint, "I'll seek it once more,
For your nomen I might overlook."
But he was not gone long, and said, as before,
"It surely is not in the Book."

The old Christian wept in a piteous way;
He said he could not bear the loss;
He'd obeyed the command to watch and to pray,
And clung, all his life, to the Cross.

The saint was much moved at his tears falling fast,
Went through the list slowly, then spoke,
"Ah, yes, my good friend, I've found it at last,
But 'tis all covered over with smoke!"

—*Roger Wyman, in Vox Populi.*

"DON'TS" FOR WIVES.

Don't disturb your husband while he is reading his morning or evening paper by asking foolish questions. He may be reading the latest scandal or divorce suit, but he is just as much interested as though it were foreign news or market reports. Be patient, and when he comes across anything he thinks you can comprehend, perhaps he will read it to you.

Don't communicate unpleasant news or ask a favor before eating. The heart is not easily touched when the stomach is empty.

Don't ever tell a man he is good looking. Some other woman probably will, some time, and in that case he won't know that her opinion concurs with yours. He carries a pocket hand-glass now, and he will shortly become addicted to pajamas.

Don't ever tell a man he has pretty legs. Men who have been known to bear up under facial compliments fall completely when they realize their legs are noticeably good.

Don't put the morning paper at the bottom of the pile, and don't have more than a dozen different places for the button-hook.

Don't impose upon your husband just because he is good enough to assist you a little in your housework. Don't leave the stove-handle in the red-hot stove, and don't ask him to empty the ash-hod. Draw a line on the ash-hod, and don't run a free horse to death.

Don't gather up all his receipts and notes that he has put carefully away on the sitting-room table and tuck them in the fire the moment his back is turned.

Don't monopolize every hook in the closet. Graciously tender him one nail for his very own—and then in mercy hang your "Mother Hubbard," your pelerine, your shopping-bag, and your bonnet some other place.

Don't be inexplicit in giving directions. When you ask him to go up-stairs for your portmonnaie tell him it is either on the table, or in the further corner of the left-hand side of the upper bureau drawer, or in the pocket of your brown dress in the closet. He will have no trouble in finding it—if you can tell him just where it is, especially in the closet.

Don't ask him where he has been the moment he enters the house, or where he is going if he starts out for a walk before breakfast. It nettles him, and men hate to have such pointed questions sprung upon them. Besides that, we live under a free flag.

Don't ask him to walk the floor with the baby half the night. A man who tramps industriously around a billiard table three nights in the week or buys an admission ticket to the opera can't be expected to be on duty at home the other three nights. Have mercy on him and give the man an opportunity to recuperate.

Don't waste your breath in useless vitupera-

tion against his favorite chum. Cultivate the chum yourself, ostensibly, when your husband is not around, and matters will assume a different aspect.

Don't put pins in your curl-papers or let your crimping-pins dangle on your forehead. They are abominations and feminine implements of warfare that men despise.

Don't leave hair in the comb, or your neck-curls where they will stick on his hair-brush. Don't put a long hair on the soap or in his tooth-brush—purposely.

Don't mend his hosiery with cotton having knots in it larger than a pea.

Don't scold him because he leaves ashes in his pipe. One of the privileges of a married man is to leave an old pipe full of ashes in just the position to empty the contents on the window-sill or the mantel-piece the moment it is touched.

Don't indulge in flights of temper when your husband suggests how his mother did. If he objects to having eggs boiled in the tea-kettle, and prefers them washed previous to cooking, endeavor to please him by indulging him in his fancies. In the meantime, bring your sons up as carefully as you can, and when they are married you yourself will doubtless be held up as an example of virtue; and revenge is sweet.

Don't be too prodigal in the use of kindling wood. There is no fruit of his toil that man guards as jealously as he does his kindling wood. He would fain put it where thieves break not through and steal. So, just because you have free access to it, don't burn up enough to last a week in a day.—*Chicago Herald.*

It was his vacation, and they were seated under the branches of a great apple tree, contented with each other's society, and silently communing with nature. His arm had inadvertantly found its way about her slender form, and her head had gradually found a resting-place upon his manly padded shoulder. They were dreaming of the happy days to come, when together they should walk over the varied pathway of life, when she suddenly turned her melting eyes upon him, and half whispered:—

"Shall you always be so contented with my society, Addy?"

[His name was Adolphus, and she called him Addy for short.]

"Always, Angy," he murmured.

And the pressure about her form increased.

"You will never, never grow tired of me," she asked him, "but will remain constantly at my side?"

"Certainly, Angy," he said.

[Her name was Angelina.]

"Remember, Addy dear, we are to be together for a lifetime. You are sure you will not weary of my presence?"

"Sure," he whispered fervently, as he brushed a bug from her dress. "Angy, I will be always at your feet. Always close to your sweet form to guard and protect my treasure from the dangers and trials of this wicked, bad world."

And he looked volumes of love into her eyes.

"You will never, never desert me for another woman? You will keep firm in your love, and remain faithful until death calls one or the other of us to a better world?" she asked, switching a large fly from her ear. "Nothing that folks might say will ever tempt you to desert my side?"

"Nothing, nothing, Angy," he said. "The whole world might rise up against you, but it would find me still steadfast in my love. Oceans may separate us, we may be parted for years, but neither time nor space shall influence my devotion. I'm yours till death!" he said passionately, as he grabbed a large beetle that was slowly making its way up his leg. "Yes, yours till death, my pearl beyond"——

"Here, let up," she said suddenly, edging away from him. "I don't know about that. You are altogether too constant. I never could stand so much devotion. I'm not one of those girls who enjoy having a man knocked around under foot all the time, and I'm afraid you won't do."

And she left him a crushed weed, broken by the willfulness of woman.

Aunt Betsey Hicks, a New England woman who had been left a widow after a few years of married life, "carried on" her husband's farm with a good deal of ability, but with such close economy that her saving devices grew famous. Next to her economy of provisions, her economy of firewood was perhaps her chief concern. At one time a sister of her late husband came to pay her a visit, and soon became convinced that Betsey was endeavoring to freeze her out. But perhaps this was not so, since the temperature was as Mrs. Hicks usually kept it.

"I declare," the visitor ventured to exclaim, "I should think you kept it pretty cold here, Betsey!"

"That 'ere peaky thermometer's to blame, Susan," said Betsey. "I guess it's got choked up. I can't get it above fifty to save my life!"

The visitor remained at Aunt Betsey's for several days, however, in spite of the choked-up thermometer, spending much of her time in bed or watching a chance to smuggle a stick into the stove when her hostess was out of the room. Late one afternoon she happened to go out into the wood-shed, and found Aunt Betsey there, with an old shawl wrapped around her shoulders and a stick in her hand, engaged in violently stirring something in a large tin can. A strong smell of petroleum filled the air.

"Betsey Hicks," said the visitor, "what be you a-doin'?"

"Wal, if you want to know," said Aunt Betsey, "I thought I'd see if I couldn't stir a leetle mite o' water into the karosene. I reckoned it 'ud go a leetle fu'ther, 'th so much comp'ny in the house as I seem to have."

An eminent barrister, now deceased, once received a severe reprimand from a witness whom he was trying to browbeat. It was an important issue, and in order to save his cause from defeat, it was necessary that Mr. X. should impeach the witness. He endeavored to do it on the ground of age. The following dialogue ensued:—

Barrister: "How old are you?"

Witness: "Seventy-two years."

Barrister: "Your memory, of course, is not so brilliant and vivid as it was twenty years ago, is it?"

Witness: "I do not know but it is."

Barrister: "State some circumstance which occurred, say, twelve years ago, and we shall be able to see how well you can remember."

Witness: "I appeal to your lordship, if I am to be interrogated in this manner. It is insolent!"

Judge: "You had better answer the question."

Barrister: "Yes, sir; state it."

Witness: "Well, sir, if you compel me to do it, I will. About thirty years ago you studied in Mr. Parchment's office, did you not?"

Barrister: "Yes."

Witness: "Well, sir, I remember your father coming into my shop and saying to me, 'Mr. B., my son is to be examined to-morrow, and I wish you would let him have a suit of clothes on credit.' I remember also, sir, that from that day to this he has never paid me my bill. That, sir, I remember as though it were but yesterday."

Barrister, considerably abashed: "That will do, sir."

Witness: "I thought it would."

Thaddeus Stevens, it is narrated by a New York paper, was sitting in his office one day chatting with a few friends, when an old lady wearing a poke-bonnet and blue goggles, and carrying a green umbrella, walked into the room. She looked about her as if in search of some one, and then asked solemnly, "Can you tell me where to find Thaddeus Stevens, the Apostle of Liberty?"

"I am Thaddeus Stevens," replied the owner of the name curtly—for he was not a man given to sentiment.

"Are you Thad-de-us Stevens, the Apostle of Liberty?"

"I suppose I am, ma'am."

"Well," said the old lady, "I came from Bucks County to see Thaddeus Stevens, the Apostle of Liberty, and to take home with me a lock of his hair."

"The Apostle of Liberty" took off his red wig and handed it to her.

"There it is, ma'am," said he. "Take as much as you want."

The *Kennebec Journal* tells a good story of a mean Maine man who lives not more than a thousand miles from Augusta. The man gets so "near" himself that occasionally he elbows himself out of a good thing. He is deaf, but is too stingy to buy an ear trumpet; and he is always trying to beat somebody down. He did this on the time in question, and this is the way it happened. The other day he went into a meat room and wanted to know how much he could purchase a certain soup bone for. The proprietor is a generous fellow, and he replied, "Oh, I'll give you this." Then the old man, with his hand to his ear, exclaimed, "Can't you take a little off from that?" Poor old fellow, he hadn't heard! and the dealer, taking pity on him, said, "Yes, call it ten cents."

Even if Representative Jason B. Brown does come from a rural district in Indiana, he has no hay-seed in his hair. A few days ago, says a Washington paper, he hired a cab in front of the Riggs House and drove round to where he expected to meet a friend. But his friend was not there, and so he drove back to the hotel around the corner. The trip occupied just six minutes.

"How much?" he asked the cabman.

"Seventy-five cents."

"Oh, no," said Mr. Brown; "you can charge only seventy-five cents an hour."

"It's just the same for a portion of an hour," said cabby.

"If that is the case," said Mr. Brown, "you can wait here for the balance of the hour. I shall be in the hotel when your hour is up."

Then he disappeared through the doorway. In less than fifteen minutes the cabby capitulated.

"Give me twenty-five cents and I will go away," he said.

He got his money and departed.

An old fellow in Ohio was notorious for cheating in horse-trading. The old fellow finally had a "call," and joined the church. At a prayer-meeting he spoke of the happiness he had felt since he had been enfolded in the mantle of the church, and declared that he had seen the error of his ways and was making a studious effort to reform. One of the brethren who was at the meeting had been cheated badly in a "hoss" deal; and when he heard the word "reform" coming from the lips of the brother who had cheated him, he said, "Brother, how about restitution?" This was a puzzler to the converted reformer; but he met the difficulty by replying, "I jine from the mark—not a minute backwards!"

A good old story is told again of P. T. Barnum. Some years ago, when he was here with the circus, a young woman called at his office and asked to see him. She was granted an interview, and told him she had a cherry colored cat which she would sell him. Barnum told her to bring it and he would give her one hundred dollars for it. The next day she appeared at the office with a covered basket. Barnum lifted the lid and found a black cat inside. "Where's the cherry cat?" said he. "Why, that's the one," said the young woman; "a black cherry cat." Barnum handed her one hundred dollars, told her to leave, and gave orders never to admit her again.

The sea serpent has arrived on his old cruising ground on the Maine coast. He has been seen by Captain Meader, of the schooner Cora F. Meader, who promptly announced his appearance to the Boothbay *Register*. When seen, his ophidian majesty was about five miles south of Monhegan, and was busily engaged in collecting porpoises for breakfast. It was when jumping after one of these fishes that the serpent was seen. Captain Meader said he had as perfect a head as any snake he ever saw. It was about as large as a water bucket, and he stuck his neck out of the water about four feet. The wake of his body seemed to be about forty of fifty feet long.

ART VERSUS NATURE.

PAT, TO ARTIST—"An' fwhat will the painted pig be worth, anyhow?"
ARTIST—"Oh, perhaps fifty or a hundred dollars."
PAT—"Faith, it's meself that'll sell ye a live one for five."